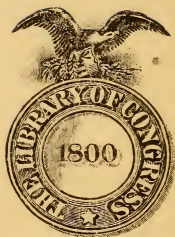


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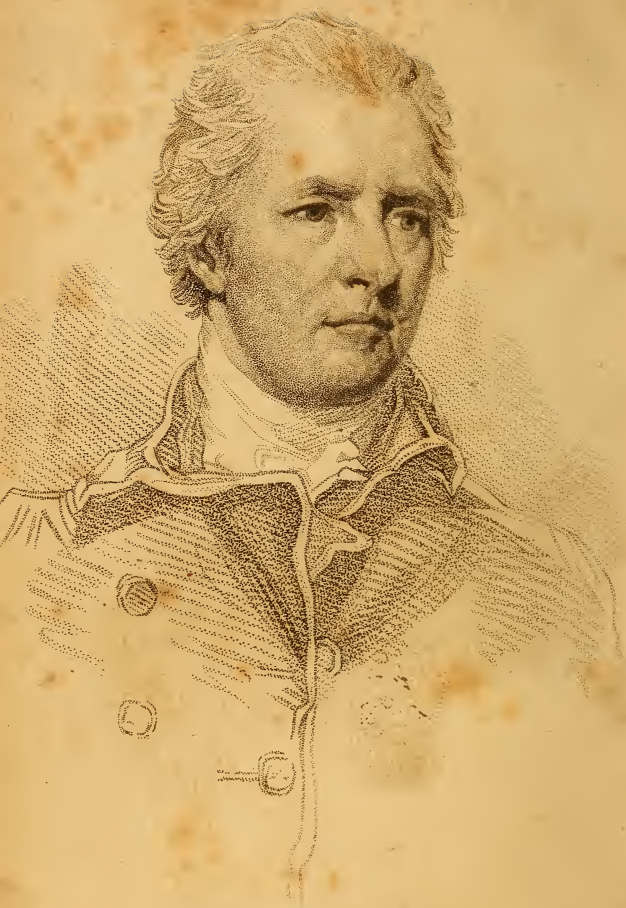


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RIGHT HON. W. PITT.

Pub Nov. 20 1800, by James Ollivier London.

MEMOIRS

OF THE

LIFE

OF

THE RIGHT HONORABLE,

WILLIAM PITT,

LATE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY, CHANCELLOR OF THE
EXCHEQUER, &c. &c.

COMPREHENDING

A HISTORY OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

DURING HIS ADMINISTRATION;

And a concise Summary of the brilliant Speeches made in Parliament,
by this distinguished Orator, on the most
important Occasions;

Interspersed with

Biographical Notices

OF HIS

PRINCIPAL POLITICAL COTEMPORARIES.

BY HENRY CLELAND, ESQ.

ILLUSTRATED WITH PORTRAITS

Vitæ est avidus, quisquis non vult
Mundæ secum pereunte mori.

SENECA.

But yesterday, the word of Cæsar might
Have stood against the world.

SHAKESPEARE.

Albion Press,

PRINTED FOR JAMES CUNDEE,

Ivy Lane, Paternoster-Row.

1867.

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PREFACE,

THE utility of biography being sufficiently established, that of Statesmen, in times of public danger, cannot fail to be highly interesting.

If we behold with rapturous awe the daring efforts of heroism, or the patient intrepidity of protracted warfare ; if we wonder at the means by which vast fleets and armies are supported ; and regard with curiosity and admiration, the numerous ramifications of domestic policy : if we see Commerce unfurling her sails before the breeze in despite of conflicting navies ; and Agriculture prosecuting her innocent and laborious career, unmindful of the depopulation which every where surrounds her : with what mingled sentiments of pleasure and veneration must we regard the hand that

guides them—that points the course, or directs the battle ;—shapes the forms of trade ;—guides the plough, or prescribes the impost ; that over the extended space of empires marshals the order, and provides the very lot of humanity !

The person to whom this grand and solemn charge is confided, is not often called to repose on a bed of roses. If in time of peace, he has the jarring interests of wealth and pride, and the disorder of intestine divisions to reconcile and compose ; and if in war, all the passions of men fermenting within, and all the arts of hostility without, to command and settle, with discerning vigilance.

Yet the power and advantages attendant on this first and most important office, seldom leave the monarch deficient in candidates for his service, notwithstanding all the querulous exclamations of a Wolsey or a Colbert.—That power to which all human beings, more or less, aspire, and which nourishes or destroys a country.

In all these circumstances did the celebrated person of whose life a memoir is here about to be given, most eminently ap-

pear. There is no principle of government from Strafford to Walpole, or, perhaps rather from Pembroke to Chatham, which are not illustrated in his administration. And when it shall be recollected that during his career occurred (not to mention the acknowledgment of America,) the great epocha of the French revolution—a shock which threatened and still threatens the existence of civilized society; that there were discussed no less topics than a Reform of the British Parliament; the Government of India, including the Trial of Hastings; the Abolition of Slavery; the Existence of a Treasonable Plot; Union with Ireland; the Impeachment of his permanent Friend and Colleague, besides strong Financial Projects, &c. with an opposition composed of talents the most respectable, and condition the most powerful, existing in a majority at the commencement of his career, and scarcely ending with his martyred life—no minister will be found to have experienced in the same or a much longer term, such baffling and tremendous circumstances, such various and awful contingencies—ob-

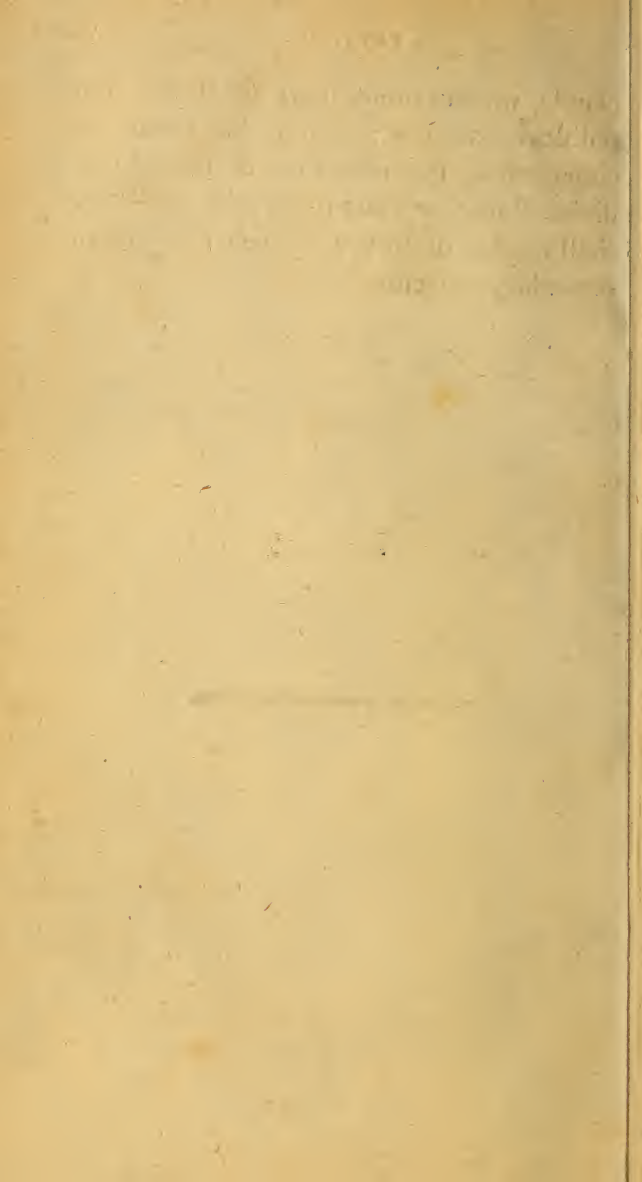
jects at once so multifarious and so magnificent!

The contrast between Mr. Pitt and his powerful rival will naturally occur; their general principles of government were diametrically opposite, yet it does not necessarily follow that either was absolutely wrong or decidedly injurious to their country. It may be lamented, rather than wondered at, that the union of two such characters was incompatible. In whatever is said of them in these pages, they will be considered as dictating in their individual persons :——

“ When you shall these unlucky deeds relate,
Speak of me as I am, nothing extenuate,
Nor set down aught in malice.”

Of the conduct and principles of Mr. Pitt, posterity will best judge. Of the pitch of grandeur and spirit to which the British empire has arrived, under his conduct and those principles, there can be no doubt. Whether this be the effect of robust political health or of feverish morbidity, time alone can determine. We have, however, attained to those characteristics of a great

people, which cannot leave us during our political existence ; and if that should be endangered, the reflection of the almost divine Burke, at least remains to us—"we shall not be destroyed by men of mean or secondary capacities."



LIFE
OF
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
WILLIAM PITT,
&c. &c.

TO write the life of William Pitt, would be to detail the political history of Britain for a long and most important period. That will not be expected in these pages, whose only aim is to satisfy the public curiosity with regard to the extraordinary man whose conduct has so long been before their eyes, “ of which all Europe talks from side to side.” and whose premature death has left unfinished a work which will be the wonder of succeeding ages.

In this narrative also, Biography will want nearly all her most fascinating charms; in it the minute springs of human action are no where to be traced—the numerous incidents which form the lives of other public men have no existence here;—the moments stolen from Wisdom, when learning utters solecisms, and gravity wit; the pictured theatre must be exchanged for the gigantic yet graceful statue; and the quips and cranks that crown the cheek of Hebe, for the decent drapery and various eloquence of the Forum.

In proportion, however, to these deductions from the pleasurable qualities of biography, will the present work be benefited in a very peculiar manner; since the time of its subject which would otherwise have been passed in that intercourse with the world from which adventure must be derived, was employed in the service of his country, in a way which will enable him the oftener to speak for himself, and to unfold those principles and political motives, so interesting in their peculiar nature, in a manner infinitely superior to what could be expected from the most correct observer of political events.

WILLIAM PITT the second* son of the first Earl of Chatham, usually surnamed the great, and the Lady Harriet Grenville, sister to Earl Temple (the patron of Wilkes) was born on the 28th of May, 1759.

Lord Chatham was the youngest son of Robert Pitt, of Boconnock, in Cornwall, Esq. by the Lady Charlotte Villiers, sister of the Earl of Grandison, in Ireland; and grandson of Thomas Pitt, governor of Fort George in the East Indies, known by the name of Diamond Pitt, from a jewel sold by him to the King of France for 150,000*l.*† His lordship (to use the words of Chesterfield‡) owed his rise to the most considerable posts and power in this kingdom singly to his own

* The elder was John Viscount Pitt, now Earl of Chatham; the younger, James Charles, died young. There were also two daughters, Lady Hester, married to the present Earl Stanhope; and Harriet.

† From the same ancestor proceeded Thomas, created Earl of Londonderry, in Ireland; and John Pitt, Esq. early devoted to the army.

‡ Letters to his son.

abilities: he was a younger brother of a very new family, and his fortune only an annuity of one hundred pounds a year.

The army was his original destination, and a cornetcy of horse, his first and only commission in it. His constitution refused him the usual pleasures, and his genius forbade him the idle dissipation of youth; for so early as the age of sixteen he was the martyr of an hereditary gout. He therefore employed the leisure which that tedious and painful distemper either procured or allowed him in acquiring a great fund of premature and useful knowledge. Thus by the unaccountable relation of causes and effects, what seemed the greatest misfortune of his life was, perhaps, the principal cause of its splendor.

“He came young into parliament, and upon that great theatre soon equalled the oldest and the ablest actors; his eloquence was of every kind, and he excelled in the argumentative as well as in the declamatory way: but his invectives were terrible, and uttered with such energy of diction, and stern dignity of action and countenance, that he intimidated those who were the most willing and the best able to encounter him: * their arms fell out of their hands, and they shrunk under the ascendant which his genius gained over theirs.”

Such is the account of his acute cotemporary, whose opinion of political men, or of men of the world, is not much to be doubted. His parliamentary interest is generally said to have originated in the celebrated Duchess of Marlborough, who obtained for him his

* Hume, Campbell, and Lord Chief Justice Mansfield.

seat to oppose Sir Robert Walpole, and afterwards bequeathed him ten thousand pounds never to accept any place in administration, a wish which, however, was afterwards not gratified, and of which the numerous enemies created by his celebrity did not fail to avail themselves.*

Thus the rivalry between the two great statesmen which was afterwards to be preserved by their sons with such ability, may be conceived to have taken rise in the earliest part of each respective career. Lord Holland was the ablest élève of Sir Robert Walpole, and against that minister, Mr. Pitt, (afterwards Earl of Chatham) poured forth all the torrents of his powerful eloquence.

As Lord Holland had adopted a younger son for the purpose of inheriting his parliamentary talents ; or rather, perhaps, from the peculiar utility of cultivating those in a younger son ; so Lord Chatham early selected his second son William, and directed his attention with that of the best co-adjutors, to his early education. The promise of his opening powers must have been highly flattering, since the fond father soon imbibed a strong persuasion that he would one day increase the glory of the name of Pitt.

The retirement of Lord Chatham soon after the accession of his present Majesty, was highly favourable to the early days of Mr. Pitt ; as while yet acquiring his classical knowledge under a private tutor (the

* Of the numerous censures in the form of characters, parallels, &c. which assailed Lord Chatham, from Wilkes to Edmund Burke, as wearing the stamp of party, or the enmity of debate, it is not intended here to take notice.

Rev. Mr. Wilson, since D. D. and canon of Windsor) at Burton Pynsent, the Earl taught him to argue with logical precision, and to declaim with force and elegance. Of his lordship's system of education as well as that of his rival, much has been said, but little ascertained. That he accustomed his son to make inquiries respecting every object that attracted his attention, and not to be satisfied without sufficient answers is but to allow him the character of an intelligent parent. It is probable he did much more. It is said, that to improve the judgment and memory of his pupil, he caused him to render a particular account of his studies, his conceptions, and his conduct; afterwards of his general opinions; reasoning with him on right and wrong, and inculcating precision of thought, and accuracy of investigation; making him cautious in the effusion of his juvenile ideas, and practising upon him all the arts of the orator, to acquaint him timely with the difficulties of his pursuit.

To the mathematics the young orator paid an attention that powerfully marked his future habits in life. With geometry, and algebraical exercises, he appeared peculiarly impressed, and their effects became soon evident in his precision and perspicuity. In every exertion he was indefatigable, and his acquisitions, in consequence, were surprizing in general ethics, jurisprudence, and politics. His *relaxations* were the History of the British Constitution and the perusal of the Parliamentary Debates.

Such is the freezing account given of the education of Mr. Pitt, while yet an infant, a system, however, which induced his fond tutor to predict that he would become a senatorial leader, either in or out of admi-

nistration, and that if a minister, he must be the premier. In the same fondness of perspective contemplation, his lordship is reported to have said, to some noblemen who called to take the young orator to the house of peers with them—"you must not think of taking my younger son there, for by G—he will get up and speak."

Not to omit the advantages of the university, however, while he thus qualified himself for his future career, Mr. Pitt was sent, in 1772-3, to Pembroke College, in Cambridge, under the tuition of Messrs. Turner and Pretyma (since Dean of Norwich and Bishop of Lincoln) thus preserving the wonted spirit of party and rivalry then prevalent, in the one instance, and the predilection for mathematical studies in the other. Mr. Pretyma was also his private instructor, and a better one could not be. Yet the blandishments of oratory were not considered in these arrangements: the pupil might be severely correct, but never engagingly pleasing. In such a subject, however, every thing might easily be conceived to be perfectible in practice, and in a great degree it certainly proved true. The instructors of Mr. Pitt, it is said, could scarcely keep pace with him. His studies were intense; his very associations were solely for the purpose of acquisition; he had yet experienced no other appetite than a thirst for knowledge. Who that ever sought her fountains under auspices seldom so favourable, does not envy his ardour, opportunities, and success?

It is agreeable to contemplate the direction of Mr. Pitt's studies at every stage of his progress. With Tacitus he had already been made well acquainted, and to Thucydides he came equally well prepared with the

strong injunction of his father, to inform himself well in that profound and perspicuous author. Cicero, Polybius, Aristotle, and the other ancient, as well as modern authors on political history and philosophy, were the next objects of his strict attention; nor was the eloquence of Cicero and Demosthenes neglected.

At Cambridge, Mr. Pitt was the model of all his compeers, and the admiration of all ranks of people, while his tutors continued loud in their praises, and were, it is said, even joined by the superiors of his college, if not the whole of the university. This was eminently marked on his admission to the degree of Master of Arts, when although unnecessarily exempted from the exercises usual on such occasions, by his relation to nobility, the public orator was lavish in his praises, to which every spectator is said to have assented, and every breast to have been filled with the liveliest presage of his future greatness. It were well if such presages were never less worthily formed in public seminaries of education—that the voice of praise in academic groves were always disinterested and sincere. In the present instance, however, this testimony requires no investigation, since its object will rest on a surer ground than the eulogy of expectant candidates for favors, not always earned without mental injury to the individual, and injustice to general society.

In 1778, Mr. Pitt for the first time experienced the affliction of the world, a few days before the completion of his nineteenth year, in the death of his father, whose tenderness and capacity had left him much to be regretted. If any thing could be supposed to solace him for such a loss, it might be fully expected

in the abstraction of his studies, and still more rationally in that general sorrow which everywhere seemed to follow it. Whatever the cause, admitting, and without injury to his lordship's character, that he had been studious of his fame and popularity, and, fortunate in his influence on the people, still, as concluded by the author already quoted*—"it must be acknowledged that he had those qualities which none but a great man can have, with a mixture of some of those feelings which are the common lot of wretched and imperfect human nature."

Of a minister of whom Johnson observed, that, "if he were dictator for six months, we should hear no more of the disputes of his time," much must be believed by the most scrutinizing. That he became tremendous to every enemy is certain—that with much money he did not grow rich, and that his knowledge was universal. It was singularly said of him, by a lady, that he was never natural but when in a passion. A public funeral and monument were accorded to him, by government without a dissenting voice; and an increase and extension of the income granted to his family. Nor were the citizens behind hand in a cenotaph to their favorite and distinguished minister.†

* Chesterfield.

† This respectable instance of municipal grandeur is created against the north-east wall of the Guildhall in King-street, Cheapside. It represents a figure of the deceased Earl, surrounded by the emblems of those objects in which he was so eminently successful.

An inscription, of which the following is a faithful copy, appears on the base.





LORD CHATHAM.

Pub. Jan 21. 1807. by James Anderson, London

There were not wanting some to suppose that Mr. Pitt's feelings were not such as to be poignantly affected by this irreparable loss ; but it was not long before he gave the best testimony of the value at which he held it, in a defence of his father's memory against what he conceived injurious rumours, that at the latter

- " In grateful acknowledgment to the Supreme Disposer of events ; who, intending to advance this nation, for such time as to his wisdom seemed good, to an high pitch of prosperity and glory ; by unanimity at home ;—by confidence and reputation abroad ; by alliances wisely chosen and faithfully observed ;—by colonies united and protected ;—by decisive victories by sea and land ;—by conquests made by arms and generosity in every part of the globe ; by commerce ; for the first time united with, and made flourish by war ; —was pleased to raise up, as a principal instrument in this memorable work,

" WILLIAM PITT.

" The mayor, aldermen, and common-council, mindful of the benefits which the city of London received in her ample share in the general prosperity, have erected to the memory of this eminent statesman and powerful orator, this monument in her Guild-hall ; that her citizens may never meet for the transaction of their affairs, without being reminded—that the means by which Providence raises a nation to greatness, are the virtues infused into great men, and that to withhold from those virtues, either of the living or the dead, the tribute of esteem and veneration, is to deny to themselves the means of happiness and honour.

" This distinguished person, for the services rendered to King George the Second and to King George the Third was created

" EARL OF CHATHAM.

" The British nation honoured his memory with a public funeral, and a public monument amongst her illustrious men in Westminster Abbey."

period of his life he had courted a connection with the nobleman then highest in the estimation of his sovereign, whose power he had always opposed. This was also the first appearance of Mr. Pitt before the public, and was certainly a well chosen opportunity.

The subject arose from the meetings of two gentlemen in the confidence of Lord Bute and Lord Chatham, who communicated freely on the subject of the latter joining administration. That in a laudable officiousness to bring together two such men as their respective patrons, each might have advanced much farther than he was warranted in any way is very likely. Dr. Addington (the father of the present Lord Sidmouth) who acted on the part of Lord Chatham, it appeared, considered himself mistaken to a certain degree.* Be it as it may, however, the enemies of both parties did not fail to make ample use of the subject, and disgrace was attached by them to the nobleman who made the first advances.

To remove this real or supposed disgrace was the object of Mr. Pitt's publication, which was issued by the Chatham family, and gave no unfavorable specimen of the acquisitions which had been the business of his yet short life. This was answered by Lord Mountstuart, who stood in the same relation on the other side, in a manner that turned the question instantly in favor of Lord Bute, and with the aid of no inconsiderable talent. To this Mr. Pitt replied in a masterly style; and, when his age is considered, notwithstanding the closeness of his application, it must

* See Adolphus's History of England, temp. Geo. III. v. 1.

be considered no mean triumph even to have contended with the knowledge and experience of Lord Mountstuart.

From Cambridge, Mr. Pitt entered a student of Lincoln's Inn, where he soon obtained a similar distinction to that of his Alma Mater, and received some honorary mark from that society. In 1780, being now of age, he was called to the bar, as the best means of initiation into business: and here the parallel between him and his rival (for the rivalry had now descended by the death of both fathers to their respective sons) must cease for the present. Mr. Fox had even at the same age, lived half a life in the world, and was in parliament. Mr. Pitt had yet never ceased from study and its progressive application. He had prepared for the bar by that intimate acquaintance with the laws and constitution which distinguishes what is called a sound lawyer; and must have distinguished him in that profession—nor was it useless to him in his subsequent career.

The first cause in which he was retained was an East Indian dispute, and he attracted the notice of Lord Mansfield on the bench; as he had done that of all his other superiors; he then went once or twice on the western circuit, and appeared as junior counsel in several causes. His judicial eloquence on these occasions is described as convincing rather than persuasive; as commanding rather than seducing the attention; as ratiocinative, more than attractive or passionate. He was, however, but preparing for a career of more importance to which he felt himself destined, and in which the talents that might have left

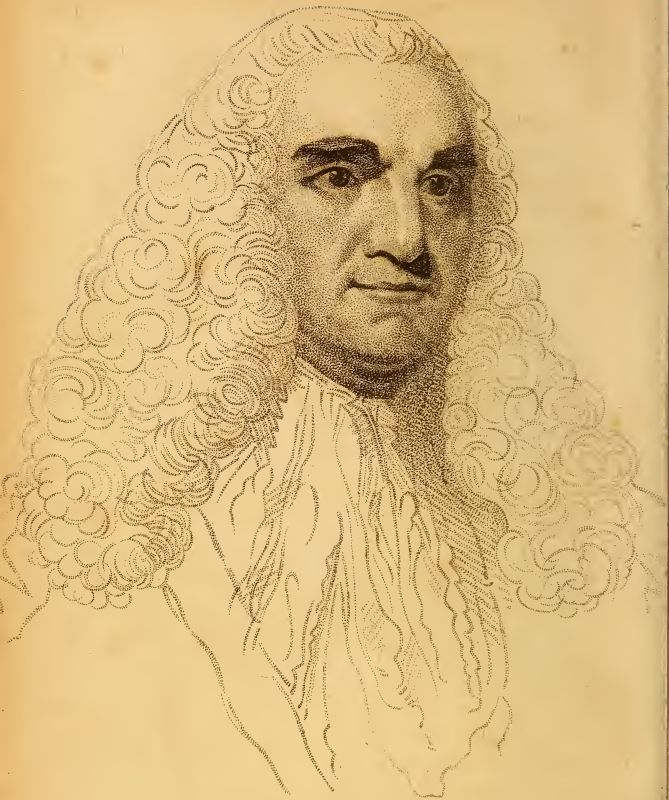
him in silence behind the bar would meet full play and influence.

At the general election of 1780, it had been proposed by some persons of the highest respectability in Cambridge, where he has already been described as so highly regarded, to nominate him as member to represent that University in parliament; but notwithstanding the estimation in which he was held, he found a contention present itself from which it was most honorable to retire. He did so, and on the ensuing year, obtained a seat for the borough of Appleby, in the interest of Sir James Lowther,* which he occupied for the first time on the 23d of January, 1781.

It will be easily conceived with what expectation the young statesman first appeared in the house of commons. In him was recognised the genius of his illustrious father, revived in him for the purpose of appalling administration, as that great man had done in his first appearance against Sir Robert Walpole. He was at this time within four months of completing the twenty-second year of his age, with a mind richly stored, as we have seen, if not with shining, with lasting qualities. He was in person tall and very thin, with a scholastic air, yet not without his father's fire and animation, when elicited by any sufficient cause, but most in the detection of error or falsehood, or in unwinding even by its own arts, the clue of evasive sophistry.

* On several occasions Mr. Pitt's first election is described to have been for Poole, but this according to the best authority is erroneous.





LORD THURLOW.

Pub. Feb. 5. 1807 by James Dundee, London.

He appeared on the side of the party which opposed Lord North,* and the American war, yet adopting his father's opinions, he did not decidedly join any party, and sat indiscriminately in the house.† His first speech took place on the 20th of February, when he had sat a month in parliament, on the bill brought in by Mr. Burke, for the regulation of the civil list revenue, abolishing useless places, &c. and as much hath been said of this first effort with a needless exag-

* The following noblemen and gentlemen composed the administration :—

Lord North, First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Earl of Hillsborough, (afterwards Marquis of Downshire)

Lord Viscount Stormont (afterwards Earl of Mansfield) and

Lord George Germaine, Secretaries of State.

Lord Thurlow, Lord Chancellor.

Earl Bathurst, Lord President of the Council.

Earl of Dartmouth, Lord Privy Seal.

Lord Hyde (afterwards Earl of Clarendon) Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.

Earl Sandwich, First Lord of the Admiralty.

Lord Viscount Townshend, Master-General of the Ordnance.

Charles Jenkinson, Esq. (afterwards Earl of Liverpool) Secretary at War.

Right Honourable Richard Rigby, Paymaster of the Forces.

Welbore Ellis, Esq. (afterwards Lord Mendip) Treasurer of the Navy,

James Wallace, Esq. Attorney General.

James Mansfield, Esq. Solicitor-General.

Earl of Carlisle, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.

William Eden, Esq. (afterwards Lord Auckland) Secretary to Ditto.

† To some readers it may be necessary to mention, that the persons composing the government in the house of commons, sit together on the right hand of the speaker.

generation tending to injure the just praise of Mr. Pitt, often so much more arduously and ably earned, the substance of the whole will be here given, as preserved on the best authority.*

Mr. Burke's bill had been read a first time, and the order of the day was for its second reading. After Mr. Burke and several other gentlemen had delivered their opinions, particularly Lord Nugent, who had argued with considerable wit, Mr. Pitt rose.

He said, that, "he gave his most hearty consent to what had fallen from his honorable friend on the other side of the house—that a proposition for the retrenchment of the civil list revenue ought to have come from his Majesty's ministers. He gave his entire approbation to this sentiment. It would have come with more grace; it would have come with more benefit to the public, if it had sprung from the royal breast. His Majesty's ministers ought to have come forward and proposed a reduction in the civil list, to give the people the consolation of knowing that their sovereign participated in the sufferings of the empire, and presented an honorable example of retrenchment in an hour of general difficulty. They ought to have consulted their royal master, and have seated him in the hearts of his people, by abating from magnificence what was due to necessity. Instead of waiting for the slow request of a burthened people, they should have courted popularity by a voluntary surrender of useless

* This is better effected from the assistance afforded by the peculiarly excellent compilation of Mr. Hathaway, whose accuracy of fact and method of arrangement cannot be too highly praised.

revenue. Far more agreeable would it have been to that house to accede, than to propose; much more gracious to have observed the free exercise of royal bounty, than to make the appeal and point out what was right or what was necessary. But if ministers failed to do this; if they interfered between the benignity and the distresses of the people, and stopped the tide of royal sympathy, was that a reason why the house of commons, his Majesty's public counsellors, should depart from a measure so congenial to the paternal feelings of the sovereign, so applicable to the wants and miseries of the people. The natural beneficence of the royal heart would be gratified by the seasonable remittance. And sure it was no reason, because ministers failed to do their duty, that the house should cease to attend to theirs. Acting as the faithful representatives of the people, who had trusted them, they ought to seize on every object of equitable resource that presented itself; and surely none were so fair, so probable, or so flattering, as retrenchment and economy. The obligations of their character demanded from them not to hesitate in pursuing those objects, even to the foot of the throne; and, actuated by duty, to advise the crown to part with useless ostentation, that he might preserve necessary power; to abate a little of pomp, that he might ascertain respect; to diminish a little of exterior grandeur, that he might encrease and secure authentic dignity. Such advice would become them, as the counsellors of his Majesty, and as the representatives of the people; for it was their immediate duty, as the commons house of parliament, to guard the lives, the liberties, and the properties of the people. The last obligation, was the

strongest : it was more immediately incumbent upon them to guard the properties, because they were the more liable to invasion by the secret and subtle attacks of influence, than either their lives or liberties—It would not derogate from the real glory of the crown to accept of the advice. It would be no diminution of true grandeur to yield to the respectful petitions of the people. The tutelage of that house might be a hard term ; but the guardianship of that house could not be disgraceful to a constitutional king. The abridgement of useless and unnecessary expense, could be no abatement to royalty. Magnificence and grandeur were not inconsistent with retrenchment and economy, but on the contrary, in time of necessity and common exertion, solid grandeur was dependant on the reduction of expense. And it was the general sentiment and observation of the house, that economy was at this time essentially necessary to national salvation. This had been the language of the noble lord (Lord Nugent) on the other side of the house, and he declared, that, if the bill then before the house had provided that all the monies to be derived from the reductions proposed were to be applied to the public service, he would have given his hearty concurrence in it, and would have become one of its warmest advocates. Here then he begged leave to join issue with the noble lord. He had said, that the savings were to be appropriated towards a fund for creating a provision for the royal family ; and this clause he had found in the bill before them. He begged to inform the noble lord, that there was a clause in the bill, which expressly stated that the monies arising from the reductions proposed should be directly applied to the public service. The

only merit that he could claim in a competition with the noble lord was, that his eyes were somewhat younger than his, and he would read the clause to which he alluded. He here read the following clause:—

‘And it is hereby enacted, by the authority aforesaid, that all salaries, lawful fees, perquisites, and profits whatsoever belonging to all and every the offices by this act suppressed, shall cease and determine with the determination of the offices severally, and be no longer paid; and that the commissioners of the treasury shall, within a reasonable time, make, or caused to be made up, an account of the salaries, and fees now payable for or on account of the said offices severally, as also an account of all the charges whatsoever, ordinary or extraordinary, incurred for, or by reason of the said offices, during [a certain number of] years last past; and shall cause a sum, to the amount of a medium of the said salaries, fees, and charges, to be annually set apart, and a separate account to be kept of the same, and to carry the said sum or sums of money, together with the amount of each and every pension, as it shall fall or determine, until the said pension list be reduced to a sum to be limited by the act (except as in this act otherwise provided) to the *sinking fund*, there to remain for the disposition of parliament.’

“This was the clearest refutation of the noble lord’s assertion; but his error seemed to have arisen from his having taken notice of another clause in the act, which ordains that the monies appropriated to the payment of annuities to be granted to those persons whose places were to be abolished, should be placed in a fund, as they should arise by the death of the

annuitants, to create a provision for the royal family. This was the error of the noble lord ; he had mistaken this provision for all the savings of the plan ; unless indeed he imagined that to place money in the sinking fund, subject to the disposal of parliament, was not to apply it to the public service. He might consider the blind profusion of the minister as the public service ; and unless it had been left to him to be mismanaged and squandered in his usual way, it was not applying it, in his opinion, to the public service. He trusted the house would excuse him for having wanted on with their patience on this point ; and he, for his own part, should think his time and labour very well repaid, if thereby he had been fortunate enough to gain over so powerful an assistant and friend as the noble lord to the principle of the bill.

“ It had been said by an honourable gentleman who spoke early in the debate, that the bill connected two objects that ought to have been kept separate. His honourable friend (Mr. John Townshend) near him, had shewn that these objects ought to go hand in hand together ; and had very properly contended that this was the fit moment for introducing reform and economy. He should add, that the bill had a third object ; much more important than either of these, and that was the reduction of the influence of the crown—that influence, which the last parliament, by an express resolution, had declared to be encreasing, and that it ought to be diminished—an influence, which was more to be dreaded, because more secret in its attacks, and more concealed in its operations, than the power of prerogative. All these objects were not only compatible with each other, but they had a

mutual connection; and ought not to be divided in a measure of reformation.

“ In all the arguments of the noble lord who spoke last on the subject of the resolutions of the 6th of April, he observed the noble lord’s objections were directed solely to the second of these resolutions; he took it for granted, therefore, that the noble lord admitted the first. That resolution pledged the house to do something effectual in compliance with the petitions of the people. Why then should the house refuse to adopt the present bill, the operation of which, in diminishing the influence of the crown, rendered it, in his opinion, much more valuable than the mere consideration of the saving it would effect.

“ But it had been said, that the saving was immaterial—it was a matter of trifling consideration, when measured by the necessities or expences of the time. It proposed to bring no more than 200,000*l.* a year, into the public coffers; and that sum was insignificant in the public account, when compared with the millions which we spend. This was surely the most singular and unaccountable species of reasoning that was ever attempted in any assembly. The calamities of the crisis were too great to be benefited by economy! Our expences were so enormous that it was ridiculous to attend to little matters of account! We have spent so many millions, that thousands are beneath our consideration! We were obliged to spend so much, that it was foolish to think of saving any! This was the language of the day, and it was by such reasoning that the principle of the bill had been disputed.

“Much argument had been brought to prove the impropriety, and the injustice, of resuming a parliamentary grant; and it had even been said, that they had not a right to do so. It would be needless to attempt to answer to such a doctrine. It contained its refutation in its weakness. But it ought to be remembered, that the civil list revenue was granted by parliament to his Majesty for other purposes than those of personal gratification. It was granted to support the power and the interests of the empire, to maintain its grandeur, to pay the judges and the foreign ministers, to maintain justice and support respect; to pay the great officers that were necessary to the lustre of the crown; and it was proportioned to the dignity and the opulence of the people. It would be an ungracious task to investigate the great difference that there was between the wealth of the empire when that revenue was granted, and the wealth at the present time. It would serve, however, to shew, that the sum of revenue which was necessary to the support of the common dignity of crown and people, at that time ought now to be abated, as the necessities had increased. The people, who granted that revenue, under the circumstances of the occasion, were justified in resuming a part of it, under the pressing demand of an altered situation. They clearly felt their right but they exercised it with pain and regret. They approached the throne with bleeding hearts, afflicted at the necessity of applying for retrenchment of the royal gratifications; but the request was at once loyal and submissive. It was justified by policy, and his Majesty's compliance with the request was inculcated by prudence, as well as affection.

“ He confessed, that when he considered the obligation of the house, he could not cherish the idea that they would dispute the principle of the bill before them. He could not believe it possible that the principle of economy would be condemned, or the means of accomplishing it abandoned. For his own part, he admitted the plan proposed. He felt himself as a citizen of the country and as a member of that house highly indebted to the honorable author of it; and as he considered it essential to the being, and the independence of his country, he would give it the most determined support.”

The second reading was, however, postponed to that day six months, and consequently lost for the session.

Such were the primæval sentiments of Mr. Pitt, and such were the terms on which he introduced himself to the senate of Great Britain. From this time he did not cease to address the house on every important occasion, and every time excelling the former. The speech, however, which has just been recited, having nothing to do with temporary politics, it was judged expedient to dismiss it without that brief sketch of the state of opinions and affairs at the time which will be necessary to preserve in the farther account of his career.

The high character of Mr. Pitt's (Lord Chatham) administration at the commencement of the present reign is in the recollection of every reader. It will at the same time be recognized that the policy of Mr. Pitt with regard to war and other particulars became opposed by a more pacific system, and by new ar-

rangements, to which he could not accord;* that in consequence he resigned, receiving as a reward for his

* Of this subject, the account of Lord Chatham himself, is perhaps the best, as delivered in a letter to his "friend in the city." See Hist. of the Minority, p. 37.

"DEAR SIR,

"FINDING, to my great surprize, that the cause and manner of my resigning the seals, is grossly misrepresented in the city, as well as that the most gracious and *spontaneous* marks of his Majesty's approbation of my services, which marks followed my resignation, have been infamously traduced as a bargain for my forsaking the public, I am under the necessity of declaring the truth of both these facts, in a manner which I am sure no gentleman will contradict; a difference of opinion with regard to measures to be taken against Spain, of the highest importance to the honour of the crown, and to the most essential national interest, and this, founded on what Spain had already done, not on what that court may farther intend to do, was the cause of my resigning the seals. Lord Temple and I submitted in writing, and signed by us, our most humble sentiments to his Majesty; which being over-ruled by the united opinion of all the rest of the king's servants, I resigned the seals on Monday, the 5th of this month, in order not to remain responsible for measures, which I was no longer allowed to guide. Most gracious public marks of his Majesty's approbation of my services followed my resignation. They are unmerited and unsolicited, and I shall ever be proud to have received them from the best of sovereigns.

"I will now only add, my dear Sir, that I have explained matters only for the honour of truth, not in any view to court return of confidence from any, who, with a credulity, weak as it is injurious, has thought fit hastily to withdraw his good opinion from one who has served his country, with fidelity and success: and who justly reveres the upright and candid judgment of it, little solicitous about the censures of the capricious and unge-

services a pension, and a barony for his lady and her heirs. The administration of Lord Bute followed, who put his system in 'practice and retired. To his lordship succeeded Mr. Grenville who with talents of the first order in planning, was less skilful in execution. Then came Lord Rockingham, with a spirit of liberal policy, but which was yet crude, and easily overturned; and Lord Chatham with his powerful name—"a name," says Burke, speaking of the same time, "that keeps the name of this country respectable in every other on the globe," again formed an administration, the apparent head of which was the Duke of Grafton.—"This was that administration," according to the same authority, "so chequered and speckled—a piece of joinery so crossly indented and whimsically dovetailed, a cabinet so variously inlaid, &c. that it was a very curious show, but utterly unsafe to touch and unsure to stand on." Thus through this unsettled state, the government tottered on, to the unsteady hands of Lord North, in which it nearly perished from indecision, amid the shock of an opposition the most powerful it had ever before experienced.

This was the period at which the present pages are arrived, when the minister had been nearly exhausted, and the proudest hearts in the British nation had been

rous; accept my sincerest acknowledgments for all your kind friendship, and believe me ever with truth and esteem,

" My dear Sir,

" Your faithful friend,

" W. PITT."

Oct. 14, 1745,

driven to wish for peace. Of Lord Chatham's opinion on that subject which descended to his son, the following speech will afford the best account, which is at the same time an honorable testimony to the best of fathers, a great man deceased. He had previously supported Colonel Barré (May 31) on the question of public accomptants paying into the exchequer the balances remaining in their hands, with sufficient knowledge of the subject. The present arose out of Mr. Fox's motion — That the house should resolve itself into a committee to consider of the American war; leading to the adoption of measures for concluding peace with the colonies. (June 12.)

The debate had arrived at its height, when Mr. Pitt, with some emotion, said "that he was induced to rise from certain expressions that had fallen from a right honourable gentleman (Mr. Rigby) on the floor, and another gentleman (Mr. Adam) on the other side of the house, respecting the ministerial and legislative conduct of a dear and most respected relation of his (Lord Chatham) with regard to the American war, and the progressive measures which had produced it. He thought it was his duty, as the son of that noble lord, and as a member of that house, to rise upon the occasion to correct the gentleman who had spoken, and to prevent the house from going away under a persuasion that the conduct and sentiments of the noble lord, were such as had been described. The silence of one so nearly connected and allied in blood and affection, might seem to countenance what had been so confidently, but erroneously stated. There might be many gentlemen in the house who were well acquainted with the political opinions of that noble per-

son. To them no regulation of the assertions of this night would be necessary ; but there might be some who were perfectly ignorant of them, or who, knowing them but imperfectly might be deceived by misrepresentations, perhaps unintentionally made.

“ Actuated by these motives, he thought it incumbent to state his relation’s opinion, as it appeared in his public conduct, and as it came further confirmed by private communication made to himself and the rest of his family. The noble person, whose name had been so often mentioned in the course of the evening, most heartily reprobated the American war in all its parts, as well on the principle on which it was taken up, as its progress, and the ultimate objects to which it pointed. He had expressed himself uniformly so on the subject ; and, he was persuaded, never gave a vote or opinion in contradiction to those sentiments. Those who acted with him well know it ; there were many living testimonies of the truth of this assertion, and innumerable circumstances could be adduced, if further evidence were required.

“ The only opinion declared by him, which could have afforded the most distant colour for such an assertion, was, that he thought this country had a right to lay duties for the regulation of commerce, duties incidental to the extension of trade, calculated for the mutual benefit of both countries ; but not a single tax or duty of any kind for the purpose of raising a revenue in America, to be remitted home, and be disposable by the British parliament. This, however, was but a speculative question, totally different and distinct from the doctrines which were productive of the war. Those at least, which produced the riots at Bos-

ton, from whence it was acknowledged by every side of the house the war originated, did not come within the above description. They were taxes upon the impost, laid on expressly by the British parliament, collected under its authority, and intended for the British treasury, and were not even pretended to hold out any advantage to both countries, but to one only; neither were they directed to promote or extend the commerce of America, but merely to draw out of the pockets of the inhabitants of that country, certain sums of money for augmenting the revenue of this.

“These were the true and genuine sentiments of the noble person alluded to. To assert, therefore, that, because he approved of one mode of conduct, which was not adopted, he approved of another system, which he had so frequently and openly reprobated, was a most extraordinary use of logic indeed. But he could not think that those who argued in this manner, expected to bring home conviction to the breast of any man who had not before been made a convert to their opinions.”

After thus explaining his noble father's principles and conduct, he proceeded to speak to the question. He said, “some gentlemen had passed the highest eulogiums on the American war. Its justice was defended in the most warm and fervent manner indeed. A noble lord (Lord Westcote) who spoke early, in the heat of his zeal had called it a holy war. For his part, though the honorable gentleman, who made the motion, and some other gentlemen, had been more than once in the course of the debate severely reprehended for calling it a wicked and accursed war, he was persuaded and would affirm, that it was a most accursed,

wicked, barbarous, cruel, unnatural, unjust, and diabolical war! It was conceived in injustice; it was nurtured and brought forth in folly; its footsteps were marked with blood, slaughter, persecution, and devastation; in truth, every thing which constitute moral depravity and human turpitude were to be found in it. It was pregnant with misery of every kind. The mischiefs, however, recoiled on the unhappy people of this country, who were made the instruments by which the wicked purposes of its authors were effected. The nation was drained of its best blood; and of its vital resources of men and money. The expence of it was enormous, much beyond any former experience; and yet, what had the British nation received in return. Nothing but a series of ineffective victories, or severe defeats;—victories celebrated only by a temporary triumph over our brethren, whom we would trample down and destroy; which filled the land with mourning for the loss of dear and valuable relations, slain in the impious cause of enforcing unconditional submission, or with narratives of the glorious exertions of men struggling under all the difficulties and disadvantages which are, in general, deemed the necessary concomitants of victory and success. Where was the Englishman, on reading the narratives of those bloody and well-fought contests, who could refrain from lamenting the loss of so much British blood spilt in such a cause, or from weeping, on whatever side victory might be declared? Add to this melancholy consideration, that on which ever side we looked we could perceive nothing but our natural and powerful enemies, or lukewarm and faithless friends, rejoicing in our calamities, or meditating our ultimate downfall.”

He said he " had taken the present opportunity of delivering his sentiments on the American war. There was not a point of view in which he considered it, there was not a feature which presented itself to his notice, but served the more and more to confirm him in the opinion he had early formed concerning its mischievous and destructive tendency; and he trusted the present opinion he had given would be received, as it was sincerely intended, as fully expressive of his principles, so far as they might be applicable, or seemed to bear a relation, to the American war, in all its future as well as former stages."

He made several detached observations on the grounds and motives on which the honourable gentleman (Mr. Fox) had supported his motion; but seemed " chiefly to rest his arguments on the injustice of the war in its outset, the innumerable mischiefs it had already been productive of, and the still more fatal and disastrous events it might bring with it, if ministers or the nation should persevere in urging a war which, whether successful or not, ought not to be further pursued, because it was totally subversive of the true constitutional connection by which both countries were united."

These were the only important discussions in which Mr. Pitt joined through the first year of his attendance in parliament, with the exception, perhaps of that on the king's speech on the opening of the ensuing session of parliament, in November 28, when he rose, as he said, " to give vent to those sentiments of indignation which in the disastrous situation of our affairs, he found it impossible for him to suppress!" That indignation, however, was little longer necessary, since a

strong attack upon Lord North being determined upon by the opposition to take place after Christmas, its preparations alarmed the "noble lord in the blue ribbon," as he was constantly called, so much, that his administration swiftly hastened to decay, and in March following he was succeeded by the united opposition, having at its head the Marquis of Rockingham, the Earl of Shelburne, and Mr. Fox.* Mr. Pitt, however, from motives, perhaps not known, but usually attributed to a minute difference of opinion on the subject of the

* The following is a list of its members:—

Marquis of Rockingham, First Lord of the Treasury.

Earl Shelburne, and the

Hon. Charles James Fox, principal Secretaries of State, the third secretaryship being abolished.

Lord John Cavendish, Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Admiral Keppel (created a Viscount) First Lord of the Admiralty.

Duke of Grafton, Lord Privy Seal.

Lord Camden, President of Council.

Duke of Richmond, Master General of the Ordnance.

Lord Thurlow to continue Chancellor.

General Conway, Commander-in-Chief of the Forces.

John Dunning, Esq. Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, and created Baron Ashburton.

(The above composed the cabinet.)

Hon. Thomas Townshend, Secretary of War.

Colonel Barré, Treasurer of the Navy.

Edmund Burke, Esq. Paymaster-General of the Forces.

Lloyd Kenyon, Esq. (afterwards Lord Kenyon) Attorney-General.

John Lee, Esq. Solicitor-General.

Duke of Portland, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.

Hon. Richard Fitzpatrick, Secretary to Ditto.

conflict with America, did not accept any place in the administration.

The new ministry with all the advantages of popularity, now proceeded to put into practice all their favorite principles, and to reverse those of their predecessors. Among these the principal objects were—overtures of peace—that of Mr. Burke's bill through the crown itself; the exclusion of contractors from parliament, and a step toward purifying elections. Even Wilkes obtained the resolutions against himself on the journals to be expunged. Mr. Pitt was not behind hand; in a rational and dignified manner, he selected a subject on which he was enabled to exhibit, in full force, the powers he had so largely acquired---this was the reform of parliament.

On the 7th of May, Mr. Pitt rose, and prefaced his intended motion, with an apology for undertaking a task so extensive, and which required abilities and experience so much greater than his; but having said this, he would trust to the indulgence of the house, and believe that the importance of the subject, to which he meant to call their attention, would induce them to treat it with the utmost seriousness and respect. "The representation of the commons in parliament, was a matter so truly interesting, that it had at all times excited the regard of men the most enlightened; and the defects which they had found in that representation had given them reason to apprehend the most alarming consequences to the constitution. It would be needless for him, in the present moment, to recal to the memory of the house the many occasions, upon which he and others, in an anxious struggle with a minister who laboured to exert the corrupt in-

fluence of the crown in support of an inadequate representation of the people, maintained the necessity that there was for a calm revision of the principles of the constitution, and a moderate reform of such defects as had imperceptibly and gradually stole in to deface, and which threatened at last totally to destroy, the most beautiful fabric of government in the world. Upon these occasions, they were unsuccessful in their efforts, on account of that corrupt influence of which he had spoken ; but at last, he thanked God, the voice of the people had happily prevailed, and we were now blessed with a ministry, whose wishes went along with those of the people, for a moderate reform of the errors which had obtruded themselves into the constitution ; and he was happy to see that there was a spirit of unanimity prevalent in every part of the kingdom, and also in every part of that house, which made the present day the fittest for undertaking this great task. The ministers had declared their virtuous resolution of supporting the king's government by means more honourable, as well as more permanent than by corruption ; and the nation had confidence in the declarations, of men who had so invariably proved themselves the friends of freedom, and the animated supporters of an equal and fair system of representation. That the frame of our constitution had undergone material alterations, by which the commons' house of parliament had received an improper and dangerous bias, and by which, indeed, it had fallen so greatly from that direction and effect which it was intended, and ought to have in the constitution, he believed it would be idle in him to attempt to prove. It was a fact so plain and palpable, that every man's reason, if not his ex-

perience, must point it out to him. He had only to examine the quality and nature of that branch of the constitution as originally established, and compare it with its present state and condition. That beautiful frame of government, which had made us the envy and admiration of mankind, in which the people were entitled to hold so distinguished a share, was so far dwindled and departed from its original purity, as that the representatives ceased, in a great degree, to be connected with the people. It was the essence of the constitution, that the people had a share in the government, by means of representation, having been designed to be equal, easy, practicable, and complete. When it ceased to be so; when the representative ceased to have connection with the constituent, and was either dependant on the crown or the aristocracy, there was a defect in the frame of representation, and it was not innovation, but recovery of constitution to repair it.

“ He would not, in the present instance, call to their view, or endeavor to discuss the question, whether this species of reform, or that, whether this suggestion, or that, was the best; and which would most completely tally and square with the original frame of the constitution. It was simply his purpose to move for the institution of an enquiry, composed of such men as the house should, in their wisdom, select as the most proper and best qualified for investigating this subject, and making a report to the house of the best means of carrying into execution a moderate and substantial reform of the representation of the people. Though he would not press upon the consideration any proposition whatever, he should still think it his

duty to state facts and circumstances, which, in his idea, made this object of reform essentially requisite. He believed, however, that even this was unnecessary, for there was not a gentleman in the house who would not acknowledge, with him, that the representation, as it now stood, was incomplete. It was perfectly understood that there were some boroughs absolutely governed by the treasury, and others totally possessed by them. It required no experience to say that such boroughs had no one quality of representation in them; they had no share nor substance in the general interests of the country; and they had, in fact no stake for which to appoint their guardians in the popular assembly. The influence of the treasury in some boroughs was contested, not by the electors of these boroughs, but by some one or other powerful man, who assumed or pretended to an hereditary property of what ought only to be the rights and privileges of the electors. The interests of the treasury were considered as well as the interests of the great man, the lord or the commoner who had connection with the borough; but the interests of the people, the rights of the electors were the only things that were never attended to, nor taken into the account. Would any man say, that, in this case, there was the most distant idea or principle of representation? There were other boroughs which had now in fact no actual existence, but in the return of members to the house. They had no existence in property, in population, in trade, in weight. There were hardly any man in the borough who had a right to vote; and they were the slaves and subjects of a person, who claimed the property of the borough, and who in fact made the return. This also was no

representation nor any thing like it. Another set of boroughs and towns, in the lofty possession of English freedom, claimed to themselves the right of bringing their votes to market. They had no other market, no other property, and no other stake in the country, than the property and price which they procured for their votes. Such boroughs were the most dangerous of all others. So far from consulting the interests of their country in the choice which they made, they held out their borough to the best purchaser, and in fact, they belonged more to the nabob of Arcot than they did to the people of Great Britain; and it was a fact pretty well known, and generally understood, that the nabob of Arcot had no less than seven or eight members in that house. Such boroughs then, were sources of corruption; they gave rise to an inundation of corrupt wealth and corrupt members, who had no regard nor connections, either for or with the people of this kingdom. It had always been considered, in all nations, as the greatest source of danger to a kingdom, when a foreign influence, was suffered to creep into the national councils. The fact was clear, that the influence of the nabobs in India was great: why then might not their imaginations point out to them another most probable circumstance that might occur, the danger of which would be evident, as soon as mentioned.—Might not a foreign state in enmity with this country, by means of these boroughs, procure a party of men to act for them under the mask and character of members of that house? Such a cabal was more to be dreaded than any other; and this among other domestic evils, was to be apprehended from the present incomplete and improper frame of representation.

How many other circumstances were there under which the various descriptions of boroughs in this kingdom were influenced, and seduced from their real and direct duty?

“ Having mentioned these facts, by which experience came in aid of reason, to convince him of the inadequacy of representation, he conceived it would be perfectly needless for him to enter into any argument to prove the necessity there was for a reform in this particular. He was convinced that every gentleman would acknowledge the truth of this fact, however they might differ about the means of accomplishing it; or about the delicacy with which they ought to meddle in any shape with the constitution. He begged leave to say, that there was not a man in that house who had more reverence for the constitution, and more respect, even for its vestiges, than himself—But he was afraid that the reverence and the enthusiasm which Englishmen entertained for the constitution, would, if not suddenly prevented, be the means of destroying it; for such was their enthusiasm, that, they would not even remove its defects, for fear of touching its beauty. He admired the one so much, so great was his reverence for the beauties of that constitution, that he wished to remove those defects, as he clearly perceived that they were defects which altered the radical principle of the constitution, and it would not be innovation, as he had said, but recovery of constitution, to remove them: gentlemen were ready to acknowledge the truth of this; but they stopped, from the difficulty of accomplishing the necessary reform. Many propositions had been made from different quarters, towards this great national object. In particular it had been said that the

purity and independence of parliament would be the most easily accomplished, and the most effectually by annihilating the corrupt influence of the crown. This he was ready to acknowledge as a great and powerful means of restoring independence and respect to parliament, and he was happy to see that under the present ministry the corrupt influence of the crown was no more. Its effect would not be felt during the ministry of a set of men who were the friends of constitutional freedom. But it was the duty of parliament to provide for the future, and take care that in no time this secret and dark system should be revived, to contaminate the fair and honourable fabric of our government. This influence was of the most pernicious kind; and at all times had been pointed to as the future source of all our miseries. It had been substituted in the room of wisdom, of activity, of execution, and of success. It was but too naturally connected with the extensive limits of our empire and with the broad and great scale upon which its operations were conducted. It had been truly said of this corrupt influence—“That it had grown with our growth, and strengthened with our strength.” Unhappily, however, for this country, it had not decayed with our decay, nor diminished with our decrease. It bore no sympathy nor connection with our falling state; but, notwithstanding the mad impolicy of a ministry for a length of years, against all the consequences of a mischievous system, and a desolated empire. He thanked Heaven that we had now an administration who placed their dependance on a more honourable basis, and who conceived nothing more necessary or essential to the

permanent interests of their country, than the total overthrow and extinction of this influence.

“It had been thought by some, that the best means of effecting a more near relation between the representatives and the people, was to take from the decayed and corrupt boroughs a part of their members, and add them to those places which had more interest and stake in the country. Another mode of making the the connection between the representative and constitution more lively and intimate, was to bring the former more frequently before the electors, by shortening the duration of parliament. But all these propositions he would beg leave for the present, to omit entirely, and to deliver the matter to the committee to be chosen, free from suggestions whatever, that they might exercise their own judgment, and collect, from the lights which they would receive full and complete information on the subject. He would therefore content himself with saying, that having mentioned the manner in which he would take the liberty of proposing to institute this enquiry, he hoped he should be forgiven for undertaking this important business. The matter of complaint was clear to him; and he was strengthened in his opinion from the advice of some of the first and greatest characters in the kingdom. The assistance which he had received, he acknowledged with gratitude, as it fortified his mind in regard to the opinions which he had formed on the subject. It was also the opinion of many respectable characters, now no more, and particularly of one (Lord Chatham) of whom every member in the house could speak with more freedom than himself. That person was not apt to indulge vague and chimerical

speculations, inconsistent with practice and expediency. He personally knew that it was the opinion of this person, that without recurring to first principles in this respect and establishing a more solid and equal representation of the people, by which the proper constitutional connection should be revived, this nation, with the best capacities for grandeur and happiness of any on the face of the earth, must be confounded with the mass of those whose liberties were lost in the corruption of the people. With regard to the time at which he had brought it on, he was convinced that it was the most proper and reasonable moment that could be imagined. If it had been brought forward during an eager opposition to the measures of government, it might have been considered as the object of spite or peevishness; and if, under such circumstances, they had prevailed, it would have been said to be carried by assault. But now there was no division of sentiment. His Majesty's ministers respected the voice of the people, and were anxiously bent on the reformation of parliament. If there was division of opinion at all, it was about the means of accomplishing the object. He concluded with moving—"that a committee be appointed to enquire into the state of the representation in parliament, and to report to the house their observations thereon."

The motion was rejected, it must be conceived, under the present circumstances, from the prevalence of private interest in those representations which were influenced. Perhaps the thing is impossible under the imperfections of the best of governments. Perhaps in Mr. Pitt it was intended as a test of the new administration. The ascertainment of either of these points

is fruitless. It is, however, to such subjects as this, and some which are soon to follow, that we must look for the character of Mr. Pitt's knowledge and eloquence, and not to the mere expatiations of party on points which are necessary to any purpose.

The death of the Marquis of Rockingham, however, put an end to this speculation, and placed Mr. Pitt in the situation for which he was designed, and to the attainment of qualifications for which, had been the employment of his life. On the 10th of July, (1782) being then two months more than twenty-three years of age, he became Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Lord Shelburne First Lord of the Treasury.*

* The new arrangements ran thus :—

Earl of Shelburne, First Lord of the Treasury.

Hon. William Pitt, Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Lord Grantham, and

Thomas Townshend, Esq. principal Secretaries of State.

Lord Thurlow, Lord Chancellor.

Lord Keppel, First Lord of the Admiralty.

Lord Camden, President of the Council.

Duke of Grafton, Lord Privy Seal.

Duke of Richmond, Master-General of the Ordnance.

Lord Ashburton, Chancellor to the Duchy of Lancaster.

Sir George Yonge, Secretary at War.

Henry Dundas, Esq. (afterwards Lord Melville) Treasurer of the Navy.

Colonel Barré, Paymaster of the Forces.

Lloyd Kenyon, Esq. (afterwards Lord Kenyon) Attorney-General.

John Lee, Esq. Solicitor-General.

Earl Temple, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.

Hon. William Wyndham Grenville (afterwards Lord Grenville) Secretary to Ditto.

The cause of this sudden change has been variously endeavoured to be accounted for, with a surprise rather arising from its unexpected occurrence than the existence of doubt upon the subject. The very sudden change in the principle of government during the last administration from that of Lord North to one entirely popular rendered more glaring by recent contest, could not fail to render the crown jealous of its prerogative, and timid of bold speculative projects. The Earl of Shelburne though a member of the same administration (principal secretary) had opinions widely different in several respects from his colleagues. That experienced nobleman knew too well the danger of experiment in the passions of mankind, and even too frequently of applying generous principles to the complicated policy of modern states. From this principle it was his lordship's opinion that the acknowledgment of American independance ought to be held out as a boon towards the attainment of peace, than given freely as a previous object of conciliation. It is therefore not wonderful that the sovereign should desire to place that nobleman in a more ostensible situation when an opportunity offered in its vacancy, when in doing it, also, the power of those who had made such strides in innovation in so short a period, would be curtailed ; since the amiable marquis who had deceased, any more than the Duke of Portland to whom the ministry looked to supply his place, could not be considered as acting with that dignity of independence which their high situation demands.

Mr. Fox, whose open and generous temper could not conceal the emotions of his heart, immediately evinced his recognition of this point, by requiring his

dismissal on the new arrangements. "Then I hope your Majesty can dispense with my services," said he. The sovereign, who knew as well how to support the dignity of his conduct, when he had acted, as to judge of the fitness of his new appointment, answered with equal promptness, "Certainly, Sir, if they are the least irksome." The friends of Mr. Fox followed his example, and made way for a still more ample change than that to which they at first objected.

From the tendency of the measures which had occupied the Rockingham administration, it was naturally to be expected that its fall would be accompanied with a very general regret. Abuses of the new ministers, with allusion to the youth of Mr. Pitt and the back, stairs were equally general. That good sense, however, which has never entirely forsaken the country, enabled the necessity of the measure to be perceived, and reconciled the change when it was necessary.

The first session of Mr. Pitt's ministry opened on the 5th of December, with a speech of unusual length, and great perspicuity, in which the cessation of hostilities with America was announced, and was censured by all the malice of party. The youth of the minister was even here an object of prevalent censure, to which Mr. Pitt replied, by admitting its exceptionable quality to that high office; but at the same time, it was a "calamity" which time would constantly remove; he hoped the system of his conduct would, in some measure, obviate the objection. He then made a manly and explicit declaration of his sentiments.

On the 17th of February, (1783) however, on the debate of the preliminary articles of peace, Mr. Pitt,

in turn, became the aggressor. In answering the speakers against the address, he particularly singled out Mr. Sheridan, on whom he gave way to a personality not unnatural to the relative situation of the parties. "No man," said he, "admired more than he did the abilities of that right honourable gentleman, the elegant sallies of his thought, the gay effusions of his fancy, his dramatic turns, and his epigrammatic points; and if they were reserved for the proper stage, they would no doubt receive, what the honourable gentleman's abilities did always receive,—the plaudits of the audience; and it would be his fortune,

"Sui plausu gaudere theatri."

But this was not the proper scene for the exhibition of these elegancies; and he therefore, must beg leave to call the attention of the house to their serious consideration of the very important question then before them.

"The clamours excited against the peace were loud in proportion to their injustice; and it was generally the case, that where men complained without cause, they complained without temper. It was necessary to look back, notwithstanding all that the hon. gentleman on the other side of the way had said, to the language of that house, and to the sentiments of that house on this very subject. Had they forgot the resolutions of last session, by which ministers were bound to recognize the independence of America? Had they considered, that the resolutions, in which he had for one most heartily concurred, took at the same time from ministers their advantage ground in negociation; and deprived them of the op-

portunity of proposing independence as a boon to be conceded, as a matter to be offered, as a price, or as the basis of peace? Had they forgot the application made by the right honourable gentleman over the way, (Mr. Fox) to the Dutch, an application couched in terms, to his feeling, more degrading than any concession in the present peace? Had they forgot the language of that day, when we are told, that we must have peace on any terms : peace for a year, for a day, just to give us a little breathing time? Were not these things to be remembered? Or were they to be told, that times and circumstances were so completely changed, that what would have been desirable then, would not be so now? Were the circumstances so materially changed? Yes, they were; for these opinions were given and these assertions made when the right honourable gentleman was in office, and when the task of making peace was likely to fall upon his own head. This was the change; this was the material alteration of circumstances which had taken place, and which now called for different conditions. The right honourable gentleman was no longer in place; he was no longer responsible for the terms, and therefore the circumstances were changed."

But to shew that there was no other change of circumstances, he went into a long and particular detail of the relative situation of the belligerent powers—their strength, their resources, their objects, and their prospects, deducing from this the inference, that it was absolutely and indispensably necessary for this country to have peace, and that under all the circumstances of the nation at the time, the terms which we had procured were fair and advantageous. That he might

prove this to be the case, he examined the articles and spoke particularly to the points which had been complained of—the boundaries of Canada, the fishery of Newfoundland, the cession of the Floridas, the abandonment of the loyalists and the other topics which had engaged the attention of the house; recommending them to temper and moderation, and spurning at all unseasonable and invidious schemes of opposition, in a moment so calamitous and alarming to the state.

With respect to the unnatural alliance which it was reported had taken place.—Mr. Pitt said, “it was undoubtedly to be reckoned one of the wonders of the age. It was not easy to reduce such an event to any common rule of judging of men. It stretched to a point of political apostacy, which not only astonished so young a man as he was, but apparently astonished and confounded the most veteran observers of the human heart.” He was excessively severe on this junction, and spoke in most pointed terms of reproach.

It is but fair to add, the retort of Mr. Sheridan to the personal allusions towards him.—In rising to explain, that gentleman said, “On the particular sort of personality, which the right honourable gentleman had thought proper to make use of, he need not, make any comment—the propriety, the taste, the gentlemanly point of it, must have been obvious to the house. But,” said Mr. Sheridan, “let me assure the right honourable gentleman, that I do now, and will at any time he chooses to repeat this sort of allusion, meet it with the most sincere good-humour. Nay, I will say more—flattered and encouraged by the right honourable gentleman’s panegyric on my ta-

lents, if ever I again engage in the compositions he alludes to, I may be tempted to an act of presumption—to attempt an improvement on one of Ben Jonson's best characters---the character of the Angry Boy in the *Alchymist*."

With regard to the "junction" alluded to, with so much point in Mr. Pitt's speech, the public was no less astonished, nor was the high popularity of Mr. Fox more than proof to the shock it occasioned.

This was no less than a coalition brought about by Mr. Burke, between Mr. Fox, himself, and colleagues, the violent opposers of *all* the principles of that nobleman, with Lord North, and his former supporters. It is accounted for by the private friendship between Mr. Burke and Lord North, and the original connection between him and Mr. Fox, but by such minute and remote admissions and reasonings, there is no crime which may not be palliated.

On the 21st of February the subject of the preliminaries was resumed. Several resolutions of censure being moved by Lord John Cavendish, Mr. Fox in a long and nervous speech, but replete with the venom of party, supported them. Mr. Pitt now rose, as if to make ample amends for the littleness of the preceding personality, he soared to the highest pitch of grandeur and sense in the following terms:—

"Sir---Revering as I do the great abilities of the honourable gentleman (Mr. Fox) who spoke last, I lament, in common with the house, when those abilities are misemployed, as on the present question, to inflame the imagination, and mislead the judgment. I am told, Sir, 'he does not envy me the triumph of my situation on this day:' a sort of language which

becomes the candour of that right honourable gentleman, as ill as his present principles. The triumphs of party, Sir, with which this self appointed minister seems so highly elated, shall never seduce me to any inconsistency which the busiest suspicion shall presume to glance at. I will never engage in political enmities without a public cause. I will never forego such enmities without the public approbation; nor will I *be questioned and cast off in the face of this house, by one virtuous and dissatisfied friend.** These, Sir, the sober and durable triumphs of reason over the weak and profligate inconsistencies of party violence---these, Sir, the steady triumphs of virtue over success itself shall be mine, not only in my present situation but through every future condition of my life: triumphs which no length of time shall diminish, which no change of principles shall ever sully.

“The fatal consequences of Tuesday’s vote, which I then deprecated and foretold, is already manifest in this house, and it has been thought on all sides requisite, to give a new stability to the peace, which that vote had already shaken. But the proof which the present motion is about to establish, *that we are determined to abide by this peace*, is a declaration that we have examined the terms, and have found them *inadequate*. Still less consistent is this extraordinary motion with the language of Tuesday. It was then urged, that no sufficient time had been allowed us to determine on the articles before us; and in the short space of two days, we are ready to pass a vote of

* Supposed to allude to Sir Cecil Wray, Mr. Powys, &c.

censure on what we declare we have not had leisure to discuss. This, Sir, is the first monstrous production of that strange alliance which threatens once more to plunge this devoted country into all the horrors of another war.

“ It is not, Sir, an exception to any single article, if well founded exceptions should really exist, that ought to determine the merits of this treaty. Private interests have their respective advocates, and subjects may be easily found for partial complaints ; but private interests must bend to public safety. What these complaints may prove, is indeed yet unknown : for whilst the honourable gentleman alone is describing with so much confidence the distresses and dissatisfaction of trade, she herself is approaching the throne with effusions of gratitude and affection. The honourable gentleman who spoke last, has fairly stated the terms by which the merits of this peace are to be decided---*the relative strength and resources of the respective powers at war*. I will immediately meet him on this issue.

“ I shall begin, Sir, with a most important subject, the state of the British navy ; and shall refer myself for proofs of what I assert to the papers now lying on your table. This appeal, Sir, to solid and authentic documents, will appear the more just and necessary when I acquaint the house, that a noble lord (Lord Keppel) from whom the honourable gentleman professes to receive *his* naval information, has varied in his statements to the cabinet, no less than twenty sail of the line.

“ We are informed, Sir, from the papers before us, that the British force amounted nearly to one hundred

sail of the line, many of these had been long and actively employed on foreign stations. With diligent exertions six new ships would have been added to the catalogue in March. The force of France and Spain amounted to nearly one hundred and forty sail of the line, sixty of which were lying in Cadiz harbour, stored and victualled for immediate service. Twelve ships of the line, including one newly built by the United States, had quitted Boston harbour under Vaudreuil, in a state of perfect repair. An immense land armament was collected at St. Domingo. Their several forces were united in one object, and that object was the reduction of Jamaica. Who, Sir, can suppose with serious confidence, that island could have long resisted a regular attack supported by seventy-two sail of the line? Admiral Pigot, after his reinforcement from Europe, would have commanded a fleet of only forty-six sail, and it has long been acknowledged in this house, that *defensive war must terminate in certain ruin*. Would Admiral Pigot have undertaken at this time offensive operations against the islands of the enemy?—Those islands upon which Lord Rodney flushed with victory, could not venture to attempt an impression. Would Admiral Pigot, Sir, have regained by arms what the ministers have recovered by treaty? Could *he*, in the sight of a superior fleet, have recaptured Grenada, Dominique, St. Kitt's, Nevis, and Montserrat? Or might we not too reasonably apprehend the campaign in the West Indies would have closed with the loss of Jamaica itself, the remnant of our possessions in that part of the globe?

" Let us next consider our situation in the east. A mere defensive resistance, however glorious had entitled Sir Edward Hughes to the thanks of this house ; but his success, if it may be termed a victory, had not prevented the enemy from landing a greater European force than we actually possess in India, and who, at this instant, are, in conjunction with Hyder, subduing and desolating the Carnatic.

" The prospect is by no means brightened when we look forward to the probable operations in the channel and in the northern seas, during the course of the ensuing summer. Thirteen new sail of the line would at that time have been added to the fleet of France ; and the Dutch force, as it has been accurately stated by a great naval officer (Commodore Keith Stuart) in this debate would have amounted to twenty-five sail of the line. What accession the Spanish force would have received is not sufficiently known. It is enough for me to state, the fleets of Bourbon and of Holland would have doubled ours in our own seas. Should we have seized the intervals of their cruize, and poorly paraded the channel for a few weeks, to tarnish again, by flight, the glories of the last campaign ? Or should we have dared to risk the existence of the kingdom itself, by engaging against such fearful odds ?

" What were the feelings of every one who hears me, (what were my own feelings it is impossible to describe) when that great man, Lord Howe, set sail with our only fleet ; inferior to the enemy, and under a probability of an engagement on their own coasts ? My apprehensions, Sir, on this occasion, however great, were mixed with hope ; I knew the superiority of British skill, and courage might outweigh the in-

equality of numbers. But, Sir, in another quarter, and at the same instant of time, my apprehensions were unmixed with a ray of comfort. The Baltic fleet, almost as valuable as Gibraltar itself, for it contained all the materials of future war, was on its way to England, and twelve sail of the line had been sent out from the ports of Holland to intercept them: Gibraltar was relieved by a skill and courage that baffled superior numbers; and the Baltic fleet was, I know not how, miraculously preserved. One power indeed, the honourable gentleman had omitted in *his* detail:—But the *Dutch*, Sir, had not been disarmed by the humiliating language of that gentleman's ministry. They were warmed into more active exertions and were just beginning to feel their own strength. They were not only about to defend themselves with effect, but to lend ten sail to the fleets of France and Spain. Here, Sir, let us pause for a moment of serious and solemn consideration!

“Should the ministers have persevered, from day to day, to throw the desperate die, whose successes had won us only a barren, though glorious safety; and whose failure in a single cast would sink us into hopeless ruin? However fondly the ideas of national expectation had diffused themselves amongst the people, the ministers, Sir, could entertain no rational hopes. Those columns of our strength, which many honourable gentlemen had raised with so much fancy, and decorated with so much invention, the ministers had surveyed with the eye of sober reason. I am sorry to say, we discovered the fabric of our naval superiority to be visionary and baseless.

“ I shall next, with submission to the right honourable gentleman who presides in that department, state, in few words, the situation of the army. It is notorious to every gentleman who hears me, that new levies could scarcely be torn, on any terms, from this depopulated country. It is known to professional men how great is the difference between the nominal and effective state of that service; and, astonishing as it may appear, after a careful enquiry, three thousand men were the utmost force that could have been safely sent from this country on any offensive duty. But I am told, Sir, the troops from New York would have supplied us with a force equal to the demands of every intended expedition. The foreign troops in that garrison we had no power to embark on any other than American service; and, in contradiction to the honourable gentleman who spoke last, and to that noble lord whose language he affects to speak in this house, no transports had been prepared, or could have been assembled, for their embarkation. Where, Sir, should they have directed their course when they were at length embarked, but into the hazard of an enemy's fleet, which would have cruized with undisputed superiority in every part of the western world.

“ No pressure of public accusation, nor heat of innocence in its own defence, shall ever tempt me to disclose a single circumstance which may tend to humiliate my country. What I am about to say will betray no secret of state; it is known, for it is felt throughout the nation. There remains, at this instant, exclusive of the annual services, an unfunded debt of thirty millions.—Taxes, Sir, the most flattering, have again and again been tried, and, instead of revenue

from themselves, have frequently produced a failure in others, with which they had been found to sympathize. But here, Sir, I am told by the honourable gentleman who spoke last, *other nations would have felt an equal distress*. Good God! to what a consequence does the honourable gentleman lead us!—Should I, Sir, have dared to advise a continuance of war, which endangered the bankruptcy of public faith; a bankruptcy which would have almost dissolved the bonds of government, and involved the state in the confusion of a general ruin? Should I have ventured to do this, *because ONE of the adverse powers MIGHT have experienced an equal distress?*

“The honourable gentleman who spoke last, has amused the house with various statements, on the different principles of *uti possidetis* and restitution. The principle of those statements is as false as it is unexpected from him. Did his great naval friend acquaint him with the respective values of Dominique, and St. Lucia?—that lord, who in his Majesty’s councils had advised, and perhaps wisely, a preference of the former. The value of Dominique, Sir, was better known to our enemies; and the immense sums employed by them in fortifying that island, prove, as well its present value, as their desire to retain it. That honourable gentleman has, on all occasions, spoke with approbation of the last peace: Was St. Lucia left in our hands by that peace, the terms of which we ourselves prescribed?—Or was St. Lucia really impregnable as to endanger all our possessions at the commencement of the present war?

“It would be needless for me to remind the honourable gentleman who spoke last of any declarations he

had made in a preceding session: professions from *him* so antiquated and obsolete, would have but little weight in this house. But I will venture to require constancy for a single week, and shall remind him of his declaration in Monday's debate, 'that this peace was preferable to a continuance of the war.' Will he then criminate his majesty's ministers by the present motion for preferring what *he* would have preferred? Or how will he presume to prove, that, if better terms could have been obtained, it was less their interest than their duty to have obtained them.

"Was this peace, Sir, concluded with the same indecent levity, that the honourable gentleman would proceed to its condemnation? Many days and nights were laboriously employed by his Majesty's ministers in such extensive negotiations;—many doubts were well weighed and removed—and weeks and months of solemn discussion gave birth to that peace, which we are required to destroy without examination; that peace, the positive ultimatum from France, and to which I solemnly assure the public there was no other alternative but a continuance of the war.

"Could the ministers, thus surrounded with scenes of ruin, affect to dictate the terms of peace? And are these articles seriously compared with the peace of Paris? There was, indeed, a time when Great Britain might have met her enemies on other conditions; and if an imagination, warmed with the power and glory of this country, could have directed any member of his Majesty's councils from a painful inspection of the truth, I might, I hope, without presumption, have been entitled to that indulgence. I feel, Sir, at this instant, how much I had been animated in my

childhood by a recital of England's victories:—I was taught, Sir, by one whose memory I shall ever revere, that at the close of a war, far different indeed from this, she had dictated the terms of peace to submissive nations. This, in which I place something more than a common interest, was the memorable æra of England's glory. But that æra is past: she is under the awful and mortifying necessity of employing a language that corresponds with her true condition; the visions of her power and pre-eminence are passed away.

*"We have acknowledged American independance—*that, Sir, was a needless form: the incapacity of the noble lord who conducted our affairs; the events of war, and even a voice of this house had already granted what it was impossible to withhold.

*"We have ceded Florida—*We have obtained Providence and the Bahama Islands.

*"We have ceded an extent of fishery on the coast of Newfoundland—*We have established an exclusive right to the most valuable banks.

*"We have restored St. Lucia and given up Tobago—*We have regained Grenada, Dominica, St. Kitts, Nevis, and Montserrat, and we have rescued Jamaica from her impending danger. In Africa we have ceded Goree, the grave of our countrymen; and we possess Senegambia, the best and most healthy settlement.

*"In Europe we have relinquished Minorca---*kept up an immense and useless expence in peace, and never tenable in war.

*"We have likewise permitted his most Christian Majesty to repair his harbour of Dunkirk---*The humiliating clause for its destruction was inserted, Sir, after other wars than the past. But the immense expence attend-

ing its repair, will still render this indulgence useless ; add to this that Dunkirk was first an object of our jealousy when ships were constructed far inferior to their present draught. That harbour, at the commencement of the war admitted ships of a single deck ; no act or expence will enable it to receive a fleet of the line.

“ In the East Indies, where alone we had power to obtain this peace, we have restored what was useless to ourselves, and scarcely tenable in a continuance of the war.

“ *That we have abandoned the unhappy loyalists to their implacable enemies---*Little, Sir, are those unhappy men befriended by such a language in this house ; nor shall we give much assistance to their cause, or add stability to the reciprocal confidence of the two states, if we already impute to Congress a violence and injustice which decency forbids us to suspect. Would a continuation of the war have been justified, on the single principle of assisting these unfortunate men ? Or would a continuance of the war, if so justified, have procured them a more certain indemnity ? Their hopes must have been rendered desperate indeed by additional distresses of Britain ; those hopes which are now revived by the timely aid of peace and reconciliation.

“ These are the ruinous conditions to which this country engaged with four powerful states, and exhausted in all its resources, thought fit to subscribe, for the dissolution of that alliance, and the immediate enjoyment of peace. Let us examine what is left, with a manly and determined courage. Let us strengthen ourselves against inveterate enemies, and

reconciliate our antient friends. The misfortunes of individuals and of kingdoms, that are laid open and examined with true wisdom, are more than half redressed ; and to this great object should be directed all the virtues and abilities of this house. Let us feel our calamities—let us bear them too, like men.

“ But, Sir, I fear I have too long engaged your attention to no real purpose : and that the public safety is this day risked without a blush, by the malice and disappointment of faction. The honourable gentleman who spoke last, has declared with that sort of consistency which marks his conduct, ‘ Because he is prevented from prosecuting the noble lord in the blue ribbon to the satisfaction of public justice, he will heartily embrace him as his friend.’ So readily does he reconcile extremes, and love the man whom he wished to persecute ! With the same spirit, Sir, I suppose he will cherish this peace too—*because he abhors it.*

“ But I will not hesitate to surmise, from the obvious complexion of this night’s debate, that it originates rather in an inclination to force the Earl of Shelburne from the treasury than in any real conviction that ministers deserve the censure for the concessions they have made ; concessions, which, from the facts I have enumerated, and the reasoning I have stated as arising from these facts, are the obvious result of an absolute necessity, and imputable, not so much to those of whom the present cabinet is composed, as to that cabinet of which the noble lord in the blue ribbon was a member. This noble earl, like every other person eminent for ability, and acting in the first department of a great state is undoubtedly an object of envy to some, as well as of admiration to

others. The obloquy to which his capacity and situation have raised him has been created and circulated with equal meanness and address: but his merits are as much above my panegyric, as the arts, to which he owes his defamation are beneath my attention. When, stripped of his power and emoluments, he once more descends to private life without the invidious appendages of place, men will see him through a different medium, and perceive in him qualities which richly entitle him to their esteem. That official superiority which at present irritates their feelings and that capacity of conferring good offices on those he prefers, which all men are fond of possessing, will not then be any obstacle to their making an impartial estimate of his character. But notwithstanding a sincere predilection for this nobleman, whom I am bound by every tie to treat with sentiments of deference and regard, I am far from wishing him retained in power against the public approbation; and if his removal can be innocently effected, if he can be compelled to resign without entailing all those mischiefs which seemed to be involved in the resolution now moved, great as his zeal for his country is, powerful as his abilities are, and earnest and assiduous as his endeavors have been to rescue the British empire from the difficulties that oppress her, I am persuaded he will retire, firm in the dignity of his own mind, conscious of his having contributed to the public advantage, and, if not attended by the fulsome plaudits of a mob, possessed of that substantial and permanent satisfaction which arises from the habitual approbation of an upright mind. I know him well; and, dismiss him from the confidence of his sovereign, and the business of state when you please, to this transcendant

consolation he has a title, which no accident can invalidate or affect. It is the glorious reward of doing well, of acting an honest and honourable part. By the difficulties he encountered on his accepting the reins of government, by the reduced situation in which he found the state of the nation, and by the perpetual turbulence of those who thought his elevation effected at their expence, he has certainly earned it dearly : and with such a solid understanding, and so much goodness of heart as stamp his character, he is in no danger of losing it. Nothing can be a stronger proof that his enemies are eager to traduce than the frivolous grounds on which they affect to accuse him. An action, which reflects a lustre on his attention to the claims of merit,* has yet been improved into a fault in his conduct. A right honourable gentleman who had exhausted his strength in the service of the state, and to whose years and infirmities his absence from parliament can only be attributed, owes to the friendship and interference of the noble earl a pension, which however adequate to all his necessities and convenience in the evening of life, is no extraordinary compensation for the public spirit which has uniformly marked his parliamentary conduct. Surely the abilities and virtues of this veteran soldier and respectable senator, deserved some acknowledgment from that community in which they have been so often and so manfully exerted. Surely his age entitled him to a little repose in the lap of that public to whose welfare his youth had been dedicated. Surely that prin-

* Alluding to the pension granted to Colonel Barré.

ciple of humanity, which stimulates those in power to commiserate in this manner the situation of neglected merit, possesses a nobleness, a generosity, a benevolence, which, instead of incurring the censure of any, ought to command the veneration and praise of all.

“ I repeat then, Sir, that it is not this treaty, it is the Earl of Shelburne alone whom the movers of this question are desirous to wound. This is the object which has raised this storm of faction; this is the aim of the unnatural coalition to which I have alluded. If, however, the baneful alliance is not already formed, if this ill-omened marriage is not already solemnized, I know a just and lawful impediment, and in the name of the public safety *I here forbid the banns.*

“ My own share in the censure, pointed by the motion before the house against his Majesty's ministers, I will bear with fortitude, because my own heart tells me, I have not acted wrong. To this monitor, who never did, and, I trust, never will deceive me, I will confidently repair, as to an adequate asylum from all the clamour which interested faction can raise. I was not very eager to come in, I shall have no great reluctance to go out, whenever the public are disposed to dismiss me from their service. It has been the great object of my short official existence to do the duties of my station with all the ability and address in my power, and with a fidelity and honour which should bear me up, and give me confidence, under every possible contingency or disappointment. I can say with sincerity, I never had a wish which did not terminate in the dearest interests of the nation. I will at the same time imitate the honourable gentle-

man's candour, and confess, that I too, have my ambition. High situation and great influence, are desirable objects to most men, and objects which I am not ashamed to pursue, which I am even solicitous to possess, whenever they can be acquired with honour and retained with dignity. On these respectable conditions, I am not less ambitious to be great and powerful than it is natural for a young man with such brilliant examples before him, to be. But even these objects I am not beneath relinquishing, the moment my duty to my country, my character, and friends, renders such a sacrifice indispensable. Then I hope to retire, not disappointed, but triumphant, triumphant in the conviction that my talents, humble as they are, have been earnestly, zealously, and strenuously employed to the best of my apprehension, in promoting the truest welfare of my country, and that, however, I may stand chargeable with weakness of understanding, or error of judgment, nothing can be imputed to my official capacity which bears the most distant connection with an interested, a corrupt, or a dishonest intention. But it is not any part of my plan, when the time shall come, that I quit my present station to threaten the repose of my country, and erect like the honourable gentleman a fortress and a refuge for disappointed ambition. The self created and self appointed successors to the present administration, have asserted with much confidence, that this is likely to be the case. I can assure them, however, when they come from that side of the house to this, I will for one most readily and cordially accept the exchange; the only desire I should indulge and cherish on the subject is, that the service of the public may be ably

disinterestedly, and faithfully performed. To those who feel for their country as I wish to do, and will strive to do, it matters little who are out or in ; but it matters much that her affairs be conducted with wisdom, with firmness, with dignity, and credit. Those entrusted to my care, I will resign, let me hope, into the hands of those much better qualified to do them justice than mine. But I will not mimic the parade of the honourable gentleman, in avowing an indiscriminate opposition to whoever may be appointed to succeed. I will march out with no warlike, no hostile, no menacing protestations ; but hoping the new administration will have no other object in view than the real and substantial welfare of the community at large ; that they will bring with them into office those truly public and patriotic principles which they formerly held, but which they abandoned in opposition ; that they will save the state and promote the great purposes of public good, with as much steadiness, integrity, and solid advantage, as I am confident it must one day appear the Earl of Shelburne and his colleagues have done, I promise them, beforehand, my uniform and best support on every occasion, where I can honestly and conscientiously assist them.

“ In short, Sir, whatever appears dishonourable or inadequate in the peace on your table, is strictly chargeable to the noble lord in the blue ribbon, whose profusion of the public's money, whose notorious temerity and obstinacy in prosecuting the war, which originated in his pernicious and oppressive policy, and whose utter incapacity to fill the station he occupied, rendered peace of any description indispensable to the preservation of the state. The small part

which fell to my share in that ignominious transaction was divided with a set of men, whom the dispassionate public must, on reflection, unite to honour. Unused as I am to the factious and jarring clamours of this day's debate, I look up to the independant part of the house, and to the public at large, if not for that impartial approbation which my conduct deserves, at least for that acquittal from blame to which my innocence entitles me. I have ever been most anxious to do my utmost for the interest of my country ; it has been my sole concern to act an honest and upright part, and I am disposed to think every instance of my official department will bear a fair and honourable construction. With these intentions I ventured forward on the public attention ; and can appeal with some degree of confidence to both sides of the house for the consistency of my political conduct. My earliest impressions were in favour of the noblest and most disinterested modes of serving the public : these impressions are still dear, and will, I hope, remain ever dear on my heart : I will cherish them as a legacy infinitely more valuable there than the greatest inheritance. On these principles alone I came into parliament, and into place ; and I now take the whole house to witness, that I have not been under the necessity of contradicting one public declaration, I have ever made.

“ I am, notwithstanding, at the disposal of this house, and with their decision whatever it shall be, I will cheerfully comply. It is impossible to deprive me of those feelings which must always result from the sincerity of my best endeavours to fulfil with integrity every official engagement ; you may take from me,

Sir, the privileges and emoluments of place, but you cannot, and you shall not, take from me those habitual and warm regards for the prosperity of Great Britain, which constitute the honour, the happiness, the pride of my life ; and which, I trust, death alone can extinguish. And with this consolation, the loss of power, Sir, and the loss of fortune, though I affect not to despise them, I hope soon I shall be able to forget :——

“ Laudo manentem ; si celeres quatit
 Pennas, resigno quæ dedit—
 ————— probamque
 Pauperiem sine dote quæro.”

By means of the coalition (a junction) already described, a majority of seventeen was obtained this day for censuring the terms of the peace, and the administration which had formed the treaty, of course considered itself no longer in power. The result was, however, different from what was usually expected on such occasions ; for, instead of the opposition immediately superseding the censured ministers, an interval of several weeks took place without any arrangement being made for the government.

On the 24th of March, being then more than a month since the preceding majority was so obtained, Mr. Coke, member for Norfolk, took notice of this unhappy circumstance, and moved an address to his Majesty that he would be graciously pleased to comply with the wishes of the house, by forming an administration which should possess the confidence of the country.

A week after (March 31) the Earl of Surrey (now Duke of Norfolk,) attracted the attention of the house to the same subject and called upon Mr. Pitt for an explanation, who answered by avowing his resignation.

Much tumultuous discussion prevailed on this subject for some time.

The sentiments of Mr. Pitt having, however, been chiefly delivered on the motion of Mr. Coke, they are here given as conducive to that general chain, which is wished to be preserved in his parliamentary transactions.

On that occasion, Mr. Pitt declared, " that he did not think that the present motion was any breach of the constitutional prerogative of the crown, or that it had any affinity to what seemed to be the opinion of some gentlemen, in respect to a parliamentary right of the commons, to interfere in a matter when the well being of the empire consisted in the formation of a ministry. He had, however, to observe to the house, that it was a matter which required their consideration, whether the motion now before them would have the effect to which it seemingly tended. For his part, he said, he did not see how the address could remove the difficulties which stood in the way of forming an administration, supposing that address unanimously carried. It only went to request, that his Majesty would form an administration, that might have the confidence of the people. He wished in that case to know who were to be the judges of the particular men who had the confidence of the people, and how that matter was to be decided. At present there did not appear any criterion by which such an opinion could

be formed. His Majesty was desired to appoint an administration, which by his royal authority he was already vested with power to do. He wished the noble lord in the blue ribbon, and his honourable and new ally to declare, upon their honour, as men, whether in their consciences, they believed that the address, if carried, would accelerate the business, or reconcile the militating opinions of party. He allowed that the empire without a government, without a ministry, was a matter of public misfortune. The present situation of the kingdom, was the absence of all the functions of government, and the affairs of the nation were thrown into a distracted state. But he demanded, whether the address moved for had any real intentional tendency to relieve the state, and whether it was not calculated for other purposes. Some people, he said, could reconcile it to their minds to part with their old principles and adopt new ideas: however such sentiments might agree with tried constitutions, and long practical habits, he was yet too young to change his opinion, and conform his ideas to the tide of interest, or the prevalence of party. He had formed one opinion, one great principle by which his conduct was to be regulated; and it had in his heart taken such root, that he could not erase it. Gentlemen talked of forgiving animosities, and altering their political opinions with as much ease as they could change their gloves; that what they reprobated to day, they were justified in applauding to-morrow; and those whom they hated, disdained, and hooted at in the morning, it was honourable, patriotic, and conscientious, that they should take to their bosom in the evening. This was a maxim as yet a stranger to his

heart. He could not coalesce with those whose principles he knew to be diametrically opposite to his own; because if they changed to his opinions, he could not depend upon them, and if he changed to theirs, he must be conscious he acted against his honest judgment. Parties formed on such a basis could never long continue. There might be a seeming coalition of sentiment with the coalition of interest; but men who had come to the years of discretion, and who well knew how such political marriages were made, would pay very little attention to the oath, by which they were bound, whenever they found it their interest to depart from it. A similarity of ideas, he said, was requisite to make friendship permanent, and, without that similarity, there could not be either public or private coalition that would last. He therefore thought it necessary to declare explicitly, that he could not bring himself to adopt the same mode of reasoning as was held in justification of the grand coalition, and that his principles were such as were not adapted to times like the present."

Mr. Pitt, after this declaration, that he would not join the coalition, asked with an air of earnestness, "if, contrary to what he had heard, and contrary to what he believed was the general opinion, he was to understand that the noble lord in the blue ribbon, and the honourable gentleman, solemnly pledged themselves to the assertion, that an arrangement of administration had not been delayed above ten hours, or some very short space of time, in consequence of the difficulties that had arisen between the noble lord (Lord North) and the noble duke (Duke of Portland) respecting the disposition of their arrangements, and that the noble

lord and honourable gentleman pledged themselves, that the whole of that arrangement had been made known wherever it ought to have been communicated? The noble lord in the blue ribbon, had mentioned that he and his honourable friend (Mr. Fox) were perfectly agreed; and yet the noble lord, publicly avowed that he should oppose the reform bill. Was this a coalition likely to exhibit a similarity of sentiment for the public good, in the most essential point of interest for the people, the noble lord and most of his new friends materially differed."

"There was a further point that he wished the house to consider; it was, to wait another day before they sent up the address, as it was probable an arrangement would then be formed. He thought this might be asked and granted now, with as great a degree of propriety as on a former day; and he said, that he had some reason to imagine an administration would be formed if not in one, at least, in two or three days. If gentlemen, however, differed with him in that opinion, he had no more objection to the motion than he had to see an honourable, honest, and permanent ministry formed. It was what he wished, for the welfare of the people, and for the peace and prosperity of the kingdom."

On the 2d of April, the new administration was announced, and was nearly the same as that which was previously intended to have taken place with the addition of the interest of Lord North.* It com-

* It was composed of the following members:—

Duke of Portland, First Lord of the Treasury.

Lord North, Secretary of State for the Home Department.

menced its operations under the most auspicious circumstances, and seemed formed for uncommon duration.

Mr. Pitt, as he had stated, was at no enmity, with this administration, and in consequence, while the popular measures with which it immediately commenced, were on foot, he brought forward a bill for regulating public offices, and a motion for a reform in parliament. On the 2d of May, after several petitions previously presented from different places had been read, Mr. Pitt rose to open the business. He declared, "that in his life he never felt more embarrassment, or more anxiety than at the present moment, when, for his

Hon. Charles James Fox, Secretary of State for the Foreign Department,

Lord John Cavendish, Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Lord Viscount Keppel, First Lord of the Admiralty.

Lord Viscount Stormont, President of the Council.

Earl of Carlisle, Lord Privy Seal.

(The above composed the cabinet.)

Lord Loughborough, Sir William Amherst, and

Sir Beaumont Hotham, Lords Commissioners for the custody of the Great Seal,

Lord George Townshend, Master-General of the Ordnance.

Hon. Richard Fitzpatrick, Secretary at War.

Edmund Burke, Esq. Paymaster-General of the Forces.

Charles Townshend, Esq. Treasurer of the Navy.

James Wallace, Esq. Attorney-General.

John Lee, Esq. Solicitor-General.

Richard Brinsley Sheridan, Esq. and

Richard Burke, Esq. Secretaries to the Treasury.

Earl of Mansfield, Speaker of the House of Lords.

Earl of Northington, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.

William Wyndham, Esq. Secretary to Ditto.

country's good, he found himself obliged to discover, and to lay before the house the imperfections of that constitution, to which every Englishman ought to look up with reverential awe ; a constitution which, while it continued such as it was framed by our ancestors was truly called the production of the most consummate wisdom : raised by that constitution to greatness and glory, England had been at once the envy and pride of the world : Europe was taught by experience that liberty was the foundation of true greatness ; and that while England remained under a government so perfectly free, she never failed to perform exploits that dazzled the neighbouring nations. To him, he did assure the house, that it was interesting, indeed interesting and awful, beyond the power of description. He wished, however, the house to view the arduous and very difficult task he had ventured to undertake, in its true light. No man saw that glorious fabric, the constitution of this country, with more admiration, nor with more reverence than himself : he beheld it with wonder, with veneration, and with gratitude : it gave an Englishman such dear and valuable privileges, or, he might say, such advantageous and dignified prerogatives, as were not only beyond the reach of the subject of every other nation, but afforded us a degree of happiness unknown to those who lived under governments of a nature, less pregnant with the principles of liberty : indeed there was no form of government on the known surface of the globe, that was so nearly allied to perfect freedom. But a melancholy series of events, which had eclipsed the glory of Britain, exhibited a reverse of fortune, which could only be accounted for upon this principle, that during the last

fifteen years, there had been a deviation, from the principles of that happy constitution, under which the people of England had so long flourished."

Mr. Pitt reminded the house how and upon what reasons the public had begun to look at the state of parliamentary representation; of the steps they had taken to procure some remedy for the inadequacy which they discovered; the degree of success that their endeavours had met with; and what it was, that particularly occasioned him to rise at that moment in support of their petitions. He said, "to put the house in possession of all these circumstances, he need only advert to the history of a few years recently past; a history which he should touch on as shortly as possible, because it was not only a most melancholy picture of calamitous and disgraceful events, but because it was so extremely difficult to mention it in any shape, that would not appear invidious and personal. He then stated that the disastrous consequences of the American war, the immense expenditure of the public money, the consequent heavy burthen of taxes, and the pressure of all the collateral difficulties produced by the foregoing circumstances, gradually disgusted the people and at last provoked them to "turn their eyes inward to themselves," in order to see if there was not something radically wrong at home, that was the chief cause of all the evils they felt from their misfortunes abroad. Searching for the internal sources of their foreign fatalities, they naturally turned their attention to the constitution, under which they lived, and to the practice of it. Upon looking to that house, they found that by length of time, by the origin and progress of undue influence, and from other causes,

the same spirit of liberty and the power of check and control upon the crown and executive government, were greatly lessened and debilitated. Hence clamours sprung up without doors, and hence, as was perfectly natural in the moment of anxiety, to procure an adequate and a fit remedy to a practical grievance, a spirit of speculation went forth, and a variety of schemes, founded in visionary and impracticable ideas of reform, were suddenly produced. It was not for him, he said, with unhallowed hands to touch the venerable pile of the constitution, and deface the fabric; to see it stand in need of repair was sufficiently melancholy: but the more he revered it, the more he wished to secure its duration to the latest posterity, the greater he felt the necessity of guarding against its decay. Innovations were at all times dangerous; and should never be attempted, but when necessity called for them. Upon this principle he had given up the idea which he suggested to the house last year; and therefore his object at present was not to innovate, but rather to renew and invigorate the spirit of the constitution, without deviating materially from its present form. When he submitted this subject to the consideration of the house last year, he was told, that the subject ought not to be discussed amidst the din of arms; the objection was not then without its force; but at present it could not be renewed, as we were happily once more in the enjoyment of the blessings of peace. This, therefore, was a proper time to enter upon the business of a reformation, which every man, who gave himself a moment's time to think, must be satisfied was absolutely necessary.

“An Englishman who should compare the flourishing state of his country some twenty years ago, with the state of humiliation in which he now beholds her, must be convinced, that the ruin which he now deplores, having been brought on by slow degrees, and almost imperceptibly, proceeded from something radically wrong in the constitution. Of the existence of a radical error no one seemed to doubt; nay, almost all were so clearly satisfied of it, that various remedies had been devised by those who wished most heartily to remove it. The house itself had discovered that a secret influence of the crown was sapping the very foundation of liberty by corruption: the influence of the crown had been felt within those walls, and had often been found strong enough to stifle the sense of duty, and to over-rule the propositions made to satisfy the wishes and desires of the people: the house of commons, (in former parliaments) had been base enough to feed the influence that enslaved its members: and this was at one time the parent and the offspring of corruption. This influence, however, had risen to such a height, that men were ashamed any longer to deny its existence, and the house had at length been driven to the necessity of voting that it ought to be diminished. Various were the expedients that had been thought of, in order to effect so salutary a purpose, as was that of guarding against this influence; of shutting against it the doors of that house, where, if it once got footing, after the resolution alluded to, liberty could no longer find an asylum. The house of commons, which, according to the true spirit of the constitution, should be the guardian of the people's freedom, the constitutional check and con-

trol over the executive power, would, through this influence, degenerate into a mere engine of tyranny and oppression, to destroy the constitution into effect, though it should, in its outward form, still remain.

“Among the various expedients that had been devised to bar the entrance of such influence into that house, he had heard principally of three. One was, to extend the right of voting for members to serve in parliament, which was now so confined, to all the inhabitants of the kingdom indiscriminately; so that every man, without the distinction of freeholder, or freeman of a corporation, should have the franchise of a vote for a person to represent him in parliament;—and this mode he understood, was thought by those who patronized it, to be the only one that was consistent with true liberty in a free constitution, where every one ought to be governed by those laws only to which all have actually given their consent, either in person, or by their representative. For himself he utterly rejected and condemned this mode, which it was impossible for him to adopt without libelling those renowned forefathers who had framed the constitution in the fulness of their wisdom, and fashioned it for the government of freemen, not of slaves. If this doctrine should obtain, nearly one half of the people must in fact be slaves; for it was absolutely impossible that the idea of giving to every man a right of voting, however finely it might appear in theory, could ever be reduced to practice. But, though it were even practicable, still one half of the nation would be slaves; for all those who vote for the unsuccessful candidates, cannot, in the strictness of this doctrine be said to be represented in parliament; and therefore they are

governed by laws to which they give not their assent, either in person or by representatives : consequently, according to the ideas of the friends to this expedient, all those who vote for unsuccessful candidates, must be slaves: nay, it was oftentimes still harder with those who are members of parliament ; who are made slaves also, and are governed by laws to which they not only have not given their consent, but against which they have actually voted.

“For his part, his idea of representation was this, that the members once chosen, and returned to parliament, were, in effect, the representatives of the people at large, as well of those who did not vote at all, or who, having voted, gave their votes against them, as of those by whose suffrages they were actually seated in the house. This being therefore his principle, he could not consent to an innovation, founded on doctrines subversive of liberty, which in reality went so far as to say, that this house of commons was not, and that no house of commons ever had been, a true and constitutional representation of the people ; for no house of commons had yet been elected by *all* the men in the kingdom. The country had long prospered, and had even attained the very summit of glory, though this doctrine had never been embraced ; and he hoped no one would ever attempt to introduce it into the laws of England, or treat it in any other light than as a mere speculative proposition, that may be good in theory, but would be absurd and chimerical to endeavor to reduce to practice.

“The *second* expedient that he heard of was to abolish the franchise which several boroughs now enjoy, of returning members to serve in parliament. These places

were known by the favourite—popular appellation of *rotten-boroughs*. He confessed that there was something very plausible in this idea; but still he was not ready to adopt it; he held these boroughs in the light of deformities, which in some degree disfigured the fabric of the constitution, but he feared could not be removed without endangering the whole pile. It was true that the representation of the people could not be perfect, nay, it would not be good, unless the interests of the representatives and the represented were the same; the moment they became different, from that moment the liberty of the people was in danger; because those who ought to be the guardians of it, find their account in circumscribing it within narrower limits than the constitution marked out, or in carrying through measures, which might in the end effectually destroy it. It must be admitted, from a variety of circumstances, which it was unnecessary for him at present to explain, that though the members returned by boroughs might be for the present the brightest patterns of patriotism and liberty, still there was no doubt but that borough members, considered in the abstract, were more liable to the operation of that influence, which every good man wished to see destroyed in that house, than those members who were returned by the counties; and therefore, though he was afraid to cut up the roots of this influence by disfranchising the boroughs, because he was afraid of doing more harm than good by using a remedy that might be thought worse than the disease, still he thought it his duty to counteract, if possible, that influence, the instruments of which he was afraid to remove. The boroughs ought to be considered, not only

as places of franchise, but also as places where the franchise was in some measure connected with property by burgage tenure; and therefore, as he was unwilling to dissolve the boroughs, he would endeavour to defeat the effect of undue influence in them, by introducing and establishing a counterbalance, that should keep it down, and prevent it from ruining the country.

“This brought him naturally to the *third* expedient, that he had often heard mentioned, which was, to add a certain number of members to the house, who should be returned by the counties and the metropolis. It was unnecessary for him to say, that the county members in general, were almost necessarily taken from that class and description of gentlemen the least liable to the seduction of corrupt influence, the most deeply interested in the liberty and prosperity of the country, and consequently the most likely to pursue such measures as appeared to them the most salutary to their country: in the hands of such men the liberties of their constituents would be safe, because the interests of such representatives and the represented must necessarily be the same. This expedient appeared to him the most fit to be adopted, because it was the least objectionable; it had the merit of promising an effectual counter-balance to the weight of the boroughs, without being an innovation in the form of the constitution. He would not then say what number of men ought to be added to the counties; he would leave that to be inserted in a bill, which, if the resolution he meant to propose should pass, he intended to move for leave to bring in; he, however, would say, that, in his opinion, the number ought not to be under one

hundred. It was true, he thought the house would then be more numerous than he could wish; but still it were better it should be so, than that the liberties of the country should be exposed to the baleful influence of the crown in the boroughs. He was not, however, without an expedient, by degrees, to reduce the number of members, even after the addition, down to nearly the present number: his expedient was this: that whenever it should be proved before the tribunal, which happily was now established by law to try the merits of contested elections, that the majority of any borough had been bribed and corrupted, the borough should then lose the privilege of sending members to parliament; the corrupt majority should be disfranchised, and the honest minority be permitted to vote at elections for knights of the shire. By this expedient he was sure the boroughs would be preserved free from corruption; or else they must be abolished gradually, and the number of members of that house be reduced to its present standard. This disfranchising of boroughs would be the work of time: the necessity of disfranchising any one, whenever that necessity should appear, would sanctify the measure; it would appear to be, what in part it would then be, an act of justice, not of whim, party, or caprice; as it would be founded, not on surmise, but on actual proof of guilt."

After amplifying upon this for some time, and shewing that it was equally founded in policy, and in justice, he urgently pressed the necessity of something being done in compliance with the petitions that had been presented, complaining of the present state of the representation; and took abundant pains to caution the house against adopting any extravagant plans of

reform that might be suggested by enthusiastic speculatists on the one hand, or obstinately refusing to take any step whatever in compliance with the petitions, under a childish dislike, and dread of innovation, on the other. After urging very elaborately an infinite variety of arguments, Mr. Pitt said, "his first resolution was what he conceived every individual member would feel the force of, and be ready to come into, without a moment's hesitation: of his second, he entertained hopes pretty nearly as sanguine, convinced as he was of its propriety and justice; and with regard to his third, though it might possibly meet with considerable opposition, he was extremely anxious to obtain for it the sanction of the house. He then read his three resolutions, which in substance were as follow:—

1. "That it was the opinion of the house, that measures were highly necessary to be taken for the future prevention of bribery and expense at elections."

2. "That, for the future, when the majority of voters for any borough should be convicted of gross and notorious corruption before a select committee of that house appointed to try the merits of any election, such borough should be disfranchised, and the minority of votes not so convicted, should be entitled to vote for the county in which such borough is situated."

3. "That an addition of knights of the shire, and of representatives of the metropolis, should be added to the state of the representation."

Mr. Pitt said, "if he should be so happy as to succeed in carrying these resolutions, his intention was to bring in a bill upon their respective principles. When that bill was under consideration, it would then be

the proper time for discussing and deciding on the number of knights of the shire to be added, and for making all such other regulations and restrictions as to the wisdom of the house might seem necessary. He therefore should not hold any gentleman, who chose to vote for his resolutions as containing general propositions, to be bound and pledged either to support the bill he intended to bring in, provided the house agreed to his present motion, or to any clauses it might be fraught with, but to be wholly at liberty, and as much unrestrained in that respect as if he had not voted in support of the resolutions. Before he sat down, he again earnestly pressed the house either to adopt his propositions, or to suggest some other plan equally culculated to remedy the grievance."

The effect of this motion of Mr. Pitt was highly gratifying to the country, and uniting with the discontent created by the coalition, tended very strongly to raise the young minister in the public esteem.

Mr. Pitt had already brought in his bill for effecting various regulations in the public offices, necessary to economy in the expenditure of the public money. On the 17th of June he rose to move its commitment, when he received a very unexpected opposition from the ministers, in whom he rather looked for an eager pursuance of such salutary measures.

Having been particularly opposed by the chancellor of the exchequer (Lord John Cavendish) Mr. Pitt expressed a good deal of surprise at what had fallen from the noble lord. He would not refer the regulations to the commissioners of public accounts, and yet he intended to continue them for another year! But above all he was surprised at hearing the noble lord say, that

the heads of the different offices would be the best persons to correct the abuses, and introduce new regulations into their several departments. He said " he would state a few facts to the house, which would convince them of two things, that abuses did exist in several public offices, and that the heads of these offices were not the most fit persons to correct them.

" If there was any object more worthy the jealousy of parliament than another, it was to take care that the receipt and expenditure of the public money were, in all great revenue offices, conducted and managed with the utmost purity and fidelity. The evil consequence of a contrary practice were too obvious to need illustration. He would, therefore, proceed to shew, that abuses in offices of revenue really existed; and that to a very alarming amount. And first he should say something with regard to fees, gratuities, and perquisites. To instance one office only; the navy office, when an enquiry was instituted by a late board of treasury, with a view to prepare the present bill of reform, the answer was, that there were no fees received by that office. Upon a closer examination of the matter, however, it afterwards came out, that although there were no fees, received as such, yet that money, to a very considerable amount, was received by some of the officers, under the name of gifts: thus, for instance, the chief clerk of the navy office received a salary of about 140 or 250*l.* a year, and it turned out that he received no less than 2500*l.* in gifts. Other clerks with smaller salaries received gifts in proportion. Mr. Pitt dwelt for some on this fact, and urged that the public were liable to have great frauds practised upon them, if those in whose hands the

means of check and controul were placed, were in the practice of receiving what certainly might be termed the wages of corruption. In the particular instances of those officers of the public yards, who were entrusted with the delivery of stores, the house must see that the practice was big with the most dangerous mischief. Mr. Pitt further stated, that in various other cases, the practice prevailed to an alarming degree, and mentioned a particular contract which had been deemed a very easy one, insomuch so, that it had been a matter of wonder how it could be fulfilled on terms so extremely reasonable. The solution of the enigma was, however, as easy as any solution could be, since it was only recollected that the officers, who were to pass the contractor's accounts, to see that his contract was duly and faithfully executed, and to report, if they found the contrary to be the fact, were each of them in the pay of the contractor. In order therefore, to put a stop to these abuses, and to prevent any more of this infamous traffic between the clerks in office, immediately concerned in checking, passing, and expediting the accounts of persons employed in serving the public with different articles, and those persons themselves, he said, the aim of one clause of the bill was to establish and ascertain the actual amount of all the fees hereafter to be taken, and to appoint an officer in each office to receive the fees thus established.

“ While he was upon this part of the subject, he took notice of what had fallen from Mr. Burke a few days since and said, that honourable gentleman had charged the two last secretaries of state with having unprecedently and illegally extorted enormous fees for passports. [Mr. Fox and Mr. Burke said across the house,

there never was any such charge made]. Mr. Pitt observing the contradiction, said, he averred it on his recollection, that the charge was as he declared it to be. He then explained the matter, by stating, that, when passports had been applied for on the conclusion of the peace, enquiry was made what had been the custom and usage of the office in that particular, when the noble lords, then secretaries of state, were each informed what the uniform practice had been, and that practice they very naturally followed. Upon the matter being complained of as a grievance, one of the noble lords had declared, he had no objection to abide by the decision of a court of law, and had in the mean time stopped the distribution of the fees so taken. So far, therefore, had the honourable gentleman, who had moved for the account of passports granted, been from bringing forward any thing adverse to the bill under consideration, that he was free to confess his obligations to the honourable gentleman in that particular, since the honourable gentleman had thereby fortified him by a very strong argument in support of the bill, and in proof of the necessity of such a bill's passing. In order to shew that he felt the matter in that way, he declared, he meant to move for an instruction to the committee, to insert a clause to make the bill extend to the secretaries of state's offices, as well as in the others already enumerated in the first clause of the bill."

"He also took notice of a remark made by Mr. Sheridan a few days ago, who had charged the late board of treasury with having created a new fee at the very time they professed to be employed in forwarding plans of economy and reform respecting office-fees in gene-

ral. Mr. Pitt said, "the charge was ill-founded, and he went into an explanation of the subject-matter of it, declaring that the lords of the treasury had acted therein solely upon the ground of custom; that the matter related to a sum claimed as a gratuity upon a contract, which the treasury, as custom and usage were proved to have warranted such gratuities, and as the regulations intended relative to such points, were not at the time carried into execution, had allowed to be taken. [Mr. Pitt produced and read the treasury minute that had been made on this occasion, in proof of what he asserted.] In the course of speaking of fees, he also mentioned the place of the secretary of the post-office, who with a salary of 500 or 600*l.* made an annual income of three thousand. Mr. Pitt stated this to arise from his having two and a half per cent. on all packets; and in the last year of the war, he said 140,000*l.* had been expended in packets, so many were either lost at sea or taken. He likewise alluded to the salaries of the two secretaries of the treasury, which he stated at 2000*l.* a year during peace, but swelled to 5000*l.* a year during war."

After very amply discussing the subject of official abuses, in respect to fees, perquisites and annuities, he proceeded to other parts of the bill, "promising not to take up the time of the house in saying much on those, which were admitted by the noble lord to be the proper objects of reform. The sale of places certainly ought to be checked, and so likewise ought some regulations to be made respecting the superannuation of officers, and the appointment of persons to discharge the duties of such as may have leave of absence. He

would mention one instance of the latter species of abuse, which, he trusted, would sufficiently demonstrate the necessity of some immediate reform. Previous to the existence of the last board of treasury, a practice had obtained of the occasional superannuation of the stampers of the stamp-office, when the commissioners of the treasury each appointed a stamper, regularly one after the other in turn, as real vacancies happened, or as artificial vacancies were created. It also pretty generally was the practice for each commissioner to appoint one of his own servants, and instantly to grant him a leave of absence, which leave of absence was constantly renewed for six months, every half year; so that, in fact, the place was a sinecure to the servants appointed, and all the business was done by a deputy. This abuse, the last board of treasury had stopped as far as in them lay, and he meant in this bill to give the regulation in this particular the sanction of an act of parliament. The creation of new offices unnecessarily, was equally a matter that called for reform. It was pregnant with abuse, and could produce no possible good to the public.

“The next article the bill stated its intention to reform, was the improvident expenditure of the public money in what were termed incidental expenses; under which head were comprehended the supply of persons in office with coals, candles, furniture, &c. This, he observed, was subject to great abuse, and had in some instances been carried to a most absurd and indefensible extent, there being in existence, to his knowledge, various proofs of officers having not only made no scruple to order the different articles, at the

expense of the public, to their dwelling-houses in town, but even to their houses in the country, and that at a most extravagant rate.

The clause Mr. Pitt next spoke of, was the clause relative to the work done in the houses held under government. The abuses under this head, he declared, it appeared from enquiry, were very great. "He mentioned the expense of repairing the house in Downing-street, in which he had the honour to be lodged for a few months. The repairs of that house only, had, he said, but the year or two before he came into office, cost the public 10,000*l.* and upwards; and for the seven years preceding that repair, the annual expense had been little less than 500*l.* The alterations that had cost 10,000*l.* he stated to consist of a new kitchen and offices, extremely convenient, with several comfortable lodging rooms; and he observed, that a great part of the cost, he had understood, was occasioned by the foundations of the house proving bad. Nor had the house of the chancellor of the exchequer alone proved a source of expense. Other houses belonging to the public—in Bushy Park, Hampton Court, and elsewhere, though they had not cost so much, had followed at no very considerable distance, and would be allowed, when the charges were ascertained, to have kept their pace in tolerably regular gradations."

"He at length came to the latter clauses of the bill, those respecting the improvident consumption of stationary wares by the officers of the different departments of government. The abuses under this article of charge were, he said, almost incredible, and the mode of abuse in some instances truly ridiculous. He had even heard of rooms being papered with stationary

at the expense of the public, and of other as unjustifiable uses of it. The annual charge on account of stationary wares, he stated to be above eighteen thousand pounds, and it would, he believed, somewhat astonish the noble lord in the blue ribbon, (Lord North) when he told the house, and informed him, (for he really believed the noble lord had no idea of any such circumstance) that the noble lord alone, as first lord of the treasury, cost the public the year before the last no less than thirteen hundred pounds for stationary. Great as this sum must appear to gentlemen, he declared, that, knowing, as he did, of what curious articles the bill consisted, he should not have wondered if the amount had been as many thousands as it was hundreds. One article of the bill was an item of three hundred and forty pounds for WHIPCORD! When he mentioned this circumstance, he desired to be understood, not as intending any thing personal to the noble lord; he was persuaded, the noble lord neither connived at, nor knew of the abuse, and from that very circumstance he drew an argument in support of his bill, and in proof of the necessity of a substantial reform. The bill of the two secretaries to the treasury jointly for stationary the same year, amounted to as much as the bill of the first lord; the bill of the five lords to little more than an hundred pounds each. Great abuse and waste of stationary wares was also practised in the houses of ministers, servants generally considering it as a part of their duty to contrive ingenious means for using more than their masters, and generally wasting ten times as much as they used. If then the board which possessed all the powers of controul, and which he doubted not had exercised

those powers with becoming vigilance, viz. the board of treasury, were liable to such gross imposition, he had a right to suspect that in the subordinate offices—possessed of less power, and not so likely to exercise any check upon abuses of this nature, similar abuses prevailed to a considerable degree. He meant to propose allowing a certain fixed sum for stationary wares to each office, as the best, and, indeed, the only practicable means of correcting the abuse. Having amplified extremely on this and the other parts of the bill, Mr. Pitt declared, he had no doubt but the plan of reform contained in the bill would save the public forty thousand a year at the least; he therefore hoped, that it would not only be the sense of the house that it should go to a committee, but that it should pass this session.

Before he sat down he took notice of Lord North's expression in a former debate, "that not a trace was to be found in the treasury, indicating a single step towards *that glorious fabric* (as the noble lord had been pleased to term it) *of reform and economy* held out in the king's speech. That speech had been often mentioned in the course of the session, and repeatedly charged with being full of vaunts and promises, never intended to be kept or fulfilled. The expression he had just alluded to of the noble lord, struck him as so very strong a one at the time, that he thought it necessary to take it down in writing, and he was determined, at the moment, to bring it to the test at some fit opportunity. As it was materially connected with the subject of the bill then under discussion, he knew of no fitter opportunity than the present. In order to bring the matter fairly within view, he declared he

would read the promises of the speech on the opening of the session, paragraph by paragraph. He did so ; and then urged the various measures tending towards a plan of reform began by the late ministry, as well as those brought before parliament, as those not sufficiently matured for the inspection of the house of commons, ere the late ministry went out. He referred to Lord North and the present chancellor of the exchequer, as witnesses, whose evidence he was entitled to upon different topics in this part of the argument. He appealed to them, whether there were not in the treasury, very laborious and accurate materials drawn up at the instance of the last board of treasury upon the mint, the royal forests, and a variety of other subjects alluded to in the king's speech, as intended to be brought forward in parliament as matters of reform ? And after going through the whole, he complimented Lord North on his well known candour on all occasions ; whence he was induced to flatter himself the noble lord would do him the justice to acknowledge he had rashly made his assertion, and that, so far from there being no trace to be found in the treasury of that glorious fabric to which he had alluded, there were the foundations laid for the whole building, and that its basis was obviously intended to be most solid and substantial. Mr. Pitt said, this latter part of his subject had been touched upon in that house, and occasioned much warmth and asperity ; he trusted that he had now put it fairly to issue, and stated it in so plain and precise a way, that it would hereafter become only a topic of cool and dispassionate discussion. He added other remarks, and at length wound up his argument with declaring that it had afforded him some

satisfaction to have had an opportunity of offering an explanation of the bill to the house; not doubting but that, after the bill had been explained, the house would acknowledge its importance, and immediately proceed to give it that consideration to which such a bill was undoubtedly entitled."

The motion was agreed to.

From what has been given will be seen the active and spirited career, into which Mr. Pitt had already fallen, and the powerful oratory with which he had already enabled himself to meet the conflicting arguments of a disordered senate.

His manly conduct, at this period, formed a powerful earnest of that ardent mind which he was afterwards to exhibit on such trying occasions. There are those who will not conceive that on any occasion could Mr. Pitt display higher powers than on the present.

The period was, however, about to arrive when they were to be called into greater play. To that period it is proposed to carry on the chain, that at one view from his own mouth may be seen the rapid progress of that minister who was thereafter to astonish Europe.

The affairs of India, which had long called for redress, in the accumulation of territory to which its constitution was not adapted, became the next subject of consideration to ministers—and on this they were to meet an opponent upon whose powers they could not calculate from his experience, or any ordinary data to be drawn from comparison.

On the 18th of November (1783) Mr. Fox produced his bill for the government of India, which

forming an entire revolution in the *system* of government which had hitherto prevailed, proposed to vest the affairs of the East India Company in the hands of certain commissioners for the benefit of the proprietors and the public.

Of this bill, however, the principle and its effects will be best perceived in the words of Mr. Pitt, who, when Mr. Fox had sat down, immediately rose, and said, "That he could not refrain from noticing the singular manner in which the right honorable Secretary (Mr. Fox) had deprecated the charge of indolence, a charge that had never been imputed to the right honorable gentleman, though it had ever been considered as a leading feature in that part of the present administration, of which the honorable gentleman had been once thought no great admirer; nor could he, at the same time, avoid remarking the claim that he had made, that parliament would never recur to a certain connexion of principle and patriotism which had excited surprise and discussion in the last session, and that they would grant the coalition a perpetual amnesty. But how ready parliament might be to accede to the right honorable gentleman's desires, he would not pretend to determine. Indeed, he knew not how far it might be adopted on the present occasion. For his own part, he could not avoid so far recurring to the present very extraordinary coincidence of sentiment and conduct of men, who were known to have acted and professed principles so diametrically opposite, as to testify his astonishment at it. He could not but observe, that the business which had been now laid before them, convinced him that there no longer subsisted a disagreement of sentiment; for, could he have

presumed to have anticipated the conduct of the right honorable Secretary, from the principles he had always opposed in his noble colleague (Lord North) when in opposite situations, he should have said, that he would have been the first to reprobate, not to propose, the system he had just divulged. Had this bill been brought forward at a former period, he should have expected to have heard it deprecated with all that warmth of sentiment, and that astonishing eloquence, for which he had been so justly admired. Although his noble colleague was indisposed, he did not conceive it a material interruption to public business; for the House had now a demonstration that the right honorable Secretary had industry and inclination sufficient to perform, not only his own share of administration, but that of the noble lord likewise.

“ With regard to the bill which had been now brought before them, he had nothing to say against its propriety, necessity, or principle, at this time. He would suspend his judgment until the whole came before them, when he would examine their provisions with the accuracy and care which they demanded. He was assured of what had been so eloquently observed by its right honorable mover, that very great and enormous abuses had been suffered in the management of our India affairs; and great indeed, he thought they must be, to admit of a measure which he would be bold to declare, was an entire abrogation of all the ancient charters and privileges by which the company had been first established, and since existed. All that he wished to mention was, that as such a bill was brought before their consideration, they would consider it with that minute attention and serious investigation

which it loudly demanded, before they suffered it to pass into a law. He the more particularly urged this, from the manner in which the bill had been introduced. He should have expected, that a bill of so extraordinary an exertion of administrative power could never have been brought forward, without being premised with reasons that would, in some sort, justify so alarming a measure. But he was sorry to say, that in all that had been urged by the right honorable gentleman to support this motion, he heard no arguments that afforded him satisfaction. It was true the bill was said to be founded on *necessity*; but what was this? Was it not *necessity* which had always been the plea of every illegal exertion of power, or exercise of oppression? was not *necessity* the pretence of every usurpation? *Necessity* was the plea for every infringement of human freedom. It was the argument of tyrants; it was the creed of slaves. He had heard no particular reason offered in favor of this necessity, except that of destroying the corrupt influence which had been exerted by the company and their servants in both houses of parliament. But surely this was an argument against the principle of the bill; for if government possessed themselves of this source of influence and corruption, it would no longer be the influence of a company, but that of the executive government. He asked, was it not the principle and declared avowal of this bill, that the whole system of the India government should be placed in seven persons, and those under the appointment of no other than the minister himself? He appealed to the sense and candour of the house, whether, in saying this, he was the least out of order. Could it be otherwise understood, or interpreted, than that these seven, who

were to have the sole direction of that part of India affairs which related to the political government were to be appointed solely by the minister? The minister would then virtually be the governor of India: he would have all the power and patronage, for which this bill was principally recommended as tending to eradicate. Under this idea, he again most earnestly recommended, that the bill might remain on the table so long as to enable every member of that house to form an adequate idea of the necessity of the measure, and the tendency of the principle.

“The right honorable Secretary,” he observed, “had his sincere thanks and applause for the manner in which he expressed his intention of giving security, stability, and permanency, to the property of the inhabitants in our territories in India. He felt his sentiments with the same warmth of animation and pleasure as was the general feeling of the whole house, and what would always characterise the liberality of an Englishman; but while he paid this deserved tribute to so generous and honorable a sentiment, he hoped never to see it adopted, if it must be attended with the absolute destruction of our rights and characters at home. The right honorable Secretary was willing to secure to the Gentoos their natural rights; but let him take care he did not destroy the liberties of Englishmen. He mentioned the influence of the crown; but had it ever been, in its zenith, equal to what it would be, when it should find itself strengthened by the whole patronage of the East, which the right honorable gentlemen was going to throw into the hands of the crown? For his part, he was ready to declare, that, in his opinion, the whole of the right honorable Secretary’s sys-

tem was nothing more, on one side, than absolute despotism, and, on the other, the most gross corruption." He concluded with observing, "that he wished this bill not to pass without a call of the house; for he was assured that not a member of parliament, when he heard of this bill, would consider himself uninterested in its discussion. He thought it one of the most bold and forward exertions of power that was ever adopted by ministers."

On the motion being carried, Mr. Pitt moved for a call of the house, as he had previously intimated, which was ordered on the next day fortnight, and which may be considered as one of the minor steps leading to the great change about to take place, to which we are directing our principal attention.

The subject was resumed on the 27th November, and counsel and petitions for the Company heard, when, on Mr. Fox's moving for the committal of his bill, Mr. Pitt arose, and, with his usual acuteness, attacked the honorable gentleman on positions in which he would appear to have committed himself. In speaking of the East India Company's affairs, which he described to be in a state of insolvency, Mr. Fox had laughingly made the following observations. "After enumerating their millions afloat, their millions in their warehouses, they come to the calculation of their specie, and it amounts to the sum of 1000*l*. This reminds me of one of our great bard's best plays, where, speaking of one of his best characters, it is said, 'So much for sack; so much for sugar; so much for burnt hock; so much for this and so much for that; but for the solid—the substantial—the staff of life—*bread*, one halfpenny!' So it is with this flourishing company;

they have millions of goods, of bonds, of debts ; but of *silver* they have one solitary thousand pounds."

To this Mr. Pitt answered, that " the right honorable gentleman had such a happy talent of rendering even the driest subject lively, that his pleasant allusion to the charge of one halfpenny for bread, in Falstaff's tavern bill, when he came to take notice of the 1000*l.* amount of silver remaining in the treasury of the East India Company, had so far caught his fancy, that it was not till a minute or two afterwards that he glanced his eye a little higher on the same page of the company's account, and saw an entry of money to the amount of 142,794*l.*" Mr. Pitt concluded by asking, " What shall be said of a minister who ventures to impose on the house a statement every way absurd and erroneous?"

Such are the steps by which the coalition ministry hastened to decline. On the 17th of December, Mr. Baker made a motion in regard to certain causes of delay in this great measure of government, " That it is now necessary to declare, that to report any opinion, or pretended opinion of his Majesty, upon any bill, or other proceeding, depending on either house of parliament, with a view to influence the votes of the members, is a high crime and misdemeanor, derogatory to the honour of the crown ; a breach of the fundamental principles of parliament ; and subversive of the constitution of this country."

In answer to this motion, Mr. Pitt wound up the subject. He said " the honourable gentleman had talked much about secret influence, and asked how ministers were to act when thus circumstanced ? In his opinion, the servants of the crown were worse than

useless, whenever they were without responsibility. For a situation thus dangerous and unconstitutional, they were indeed strictly answerable. Their duty under circumstances thus dishonorable and inefficient, was therefore obvious and indispensable. The moment they could not answer for their own measures, let them retire. They were no longer fit to occupy stations which they did not adequately fill."

On the following night, (December 18) at a late hour, Lord North and Mr. Fox, the two Secretaries of State, received their dismissal through a special messenger, and were ordered to deliver the seals of office through the under secretaries, to prevent the necessity of an interview; and, on the next morning, letters to a similar effect were sent to the other members of the cabinet in the name of Earl Temple, appointed Secretary of State, but who in two days after resigned.

This administration, of which Mr. Pitt was at the head, and his friend, Mr. Dundas, again Treasurer of the Navy,* though appointed by his Majesty, had a

* The following formed the new administration :---

Right Hon. William Pitt, First Lord of the Treasury, and Chancellor of the Exchequer,

Marquis of Carmarthen, Secretary of State for the Foreign Department.

Lord Sidney, Secretary of State for the Home Department.

Earl Gower, (succeeded by Lord Camden,) President of the Council.

Duke of Rutland, (succeeded by Earl Gower,) Lord Privy Seal.

Earl Howe, First Lord of the Admiralty.

Lord Thurlow, Lord Chancellor.

The above composed the Cabinet.





LORD GRENVILLE.

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considerable struggle to encounter, before it could possess itself of the power and influence in parliament necessary to render it efficient. The effect of this struggle was almost a suspension of public business for a time. If, however, it could be conceived to have been occasioned by any other motive than a desire to retain the sweets of office in the dismissed ministry, it might be called a struggle the most glorious to the country, in which a majority in the House of Commons asserted itself in opposition to the crown and its servants.

To the period when the administration became settled, until which Mr. Pitt could be scarcely regarded as minister, this account proceeds, before we take that view of our illustrious subject embarked on his full career of glory, which is the next, and not least important, object of these pages.

On the meeting of parliament after the recess, (January 12, 1784,) Mr. Pitt met his host of opponents as

Duke of Richmond, Master-General of the Ordnance.

Lloyd Kenyon, (afterwards Lord Kenyon) Attorney-General.

Richard Pepper Arden, Esq. (afterwards Lord Alvanley,) Solicitor-General.

Right Hon. William Wyndham Grenville, (afterwards Lord Grenville,) and

Lord Mulgrave, Joint Paymasters of the Forces.

Henry Dundas, Esq. (afterwards Lord Melville) Treasurer of the Navy.

Sir George Yonge, Secretary at War.

George Rose, Esq. and

Thomas Steele, Esq. Secretaries of the Treasury.

Duke of Rutland, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.

Thomas Orde, Esq. Secretary to ditto.

first minister of Great Britain. He rose to present a message, but was anticipated by Mr. Fox, who moved the order of the day. After that gentleman had spoken, Mr. Pitt again arose.

“He was by no means anxious,” he said, “to prevent the house from going into the committee on the state of the nation, or to keep the right honorable gentleman from the possession of the house, to the gaining of which such art and such accommodation had been used. He could not be at all surprised that those men, who before the recess had been so clamorous and so petulant, and who had gone such strange lengths, at a time when those persons, who unquestionably ought to be present at the discussion of all important questions were necessarily absent, should now have proceeded in the same way, and taken the advantage of absence to bring on a measure, by which he, as the minister of the crown, should be prevented from delivering a message from his Majesty. It was not his desire to prevent gentlemen from saying any thing that they might imagine would support that petulance which they had shewn before the recess, that unjustifiable violence, and those unprecedented steps which they had taken, for the purpose of inflaming the country, and exciting jealousies for which there was no real foundation. He was happy to see the house met again, and that now the ministers of the crown might be able to face the assertions, the insinuations that were thrown out; for nothing in the shape of a charge had been brought forward, nothing had been attempted to be proved: now they would have it in their power to meet the enquiries and the propositions that might be agitated in the committee on the state of the nation;

and he assured the house, that he should not shrink from any question, charge, or insinuation, which the gentlemen on the other side might chuse to bring against him.

“ At the same time, however, that he cheerfully expressed his readiness to go into the committee on the state of the nation, he thought it right that this committee should be delayed for some short time, and he trusted the reasons which he should give would be satisfactory to the house. It had pleased his Majesty to command his services, at a time when, however, he might feel himself unqualified for the high station of minister, he could not think himself justified in conscience to decline. The circumstances of the country were peculiar and distressing. The East India bill, brought in by the right honorable gentleman, a bill so violent in its form as to give just reason for alarm to every thinking man, had been, by what powerful management it was not for him to say, hurried through the house. That bill established a species of influence unknown to the constitution of this country; and he was one of a most respectable minority, who thought, that if it had passed into a law, the independence of that house, the equilibrium between the three estates of the realm, and the beautiful frame of our government were at an end. That bill passed this house, but at the same time it was the idea of all men, even of those who objected to that bill as unfit to be passed, that some bill was essentially necessary; and he had pledged himself if it was withdrawn or thrown out, to propose one less violent in its principles, and, as he thought, more adequate to its purposes. Would any man object to his moving for leave to bring in that bill?

Would not all sides of the house acknowledge, that the first object to be embraced was the India business? It was for this question that the house was impatient. They had thought proper to present an address to the throne, testifying their extreme anxiety to go upon this important pursuit, which they stated to be so urgent, as to make them dread any interruption whatever. Was it possible, then, they should think of interrupting the business? Was it possible that they should think of preventing the introduction of a new bill, which was the only way of coming fairly to the business? Whatever serious enquiry into the state of the nation might be meditated afterwards, he should think it his duty most attentively and cheerfully to accompany. In the mean time, he begged the house to consider that this was the first day when the new ministers had met them in parliament. That ministry was formed, was called by his Majesty into office, chiefly on the ground of the India bill. Their first duty was to frame a system for the government of India. They had not opposed the last bill by cavilling; they had not objected to it from envy to the parents of it: they had opposed it because they thought that its objects might be accomplished in a safer way. This was the point on which they were at issue. They had now to prove that they had not lightly disturbed the government of the country; that they had not set up a captious opposition, an opposition to men merely; but that they opposed a most violent measure; and having overthrown it, they thought it their just duty to substitute a more moderate, a more constitutional scheme in its place."

He spoke again of the clamour which had been excited, and said, "he was ready to meet it all. He had

objected to the last bill, because it created a new and enormous influence, by vesting in certain nominees of the minister all the patronage of the East. He stated all his objections to Mr. Fox's bill, and said that he was now called upon by his duty, to bring in a new bill; and if the house, by agreeing with him to postpone the order of the day, would allow him to move for leave to bring in his bill, he would state all the outlines of his system as shortly and precisely as he could. He trusted that he should not be prevented, because the right honorable gentleman had forestalled the house, by rising at a time when those persons were absent, whose duty it was to conduct official business; and he hoped the house in general would agree with him in voting against the order of the day."

In answer to much scurrility which had been used against him during the whole of the debate, after his preceding speech, Mr. Pitt made the following observations.—

He declared he came up no back stairs: that when he was sent for by his sovereign to know whether he would accept of office, he necessarily went to the royal closet; that he knew of no secret influence, and that his own integrity would be his guardian against that danger; but the house might rest assured, whenever he discovered any, he would not stay a moment longer in office. "I will neither have the meanness," said Mr. Pitt, "to act upon the advice of others, nor the hypocrisy to pretend, when the measures of an administrator, in which I have had a share, are deserving of censure, that they were measures not of my advising. If any former ministers take these charges to themselves, to them be the sting. Little did I think

to be ever charged in this house with being the tool and abettor of secret influence. The novelty of the imputation only renders it so much the more contemptible. This is the only answer I shall ever deign to make upon the subject, and I wish the house to bear it in their mind, and judge of my future conduct by my present declaration ; the integrity of my own heart, and the probity of all my public, as well as my private principles, shall always be my sources of action. I will never condescend to be the instrument of any secret advisers whatever ; nor, in one instance, while I have the honor to act as minister of the crown in this house, will I be responsible for measures not my own, or at least in which my heart and judgment do not cordially acquiesce."

With regard to the questions put to him as to the dissolution, it did not become him to comment on the words of a most gracious answer of the sovereign delivered from the throne ; neither would he presume to compromise the royal prerogative, or bargain it away in the House of Commons. When his honorable friend, (Mr. Dundas,) in whose hands he considered his honor to be as safe as in his own, before the recess, in his name, and by his authority, pledged himself to the house, that he, (Mr. Pitt,) would not advise a dissolution, such at that time had been his real sentiment : he could not at present say more, but he hoped, nevertheless, the house would now consent to receive and go into the consideration of his India bill.

Mr. Pitt remarking only, " that opposition, he was convinced, was fruitless ; and declaring that he had taken upon him the government of the country upon one single, plain, intelligible principle, by which he



VISCOUNT MELVILLE.



desired to stand or fall, viz. to save the country from the India bill, which threatened destruction to its liberties;—that his conduct was uniform and intelligible, and that the nation and the world would understand and applaud it.”

Consonant to these declarations, Mr. Pitt produced his bill for the government of India on the 14th of January, in which he had studiously regarded the feelings of the East India Company, on points which Mr. Fox had set at nought, and consulted the political interests of his country rather than an indiscriminate popularity.

On presenting it, Mr. Pitt rose and said, “in performance of his engagement to the public and to the house, and to discharge that duty which was indispensable to him in the situation which he held. He was neither deterred by the circumstances of the time, nor appearance of the agitation of that assembly, from rising to move for the introduction of a new bill for settling the government of India, because he knew it to be the most immediate concern of the country, and that which, before all other things, called for the consideration of parliament. He was aware that, in the present circumstances of the times, any proposition that came from him was not likely to be treated by certain persons with impartiality or justice; for they had already excited a clamour against what they conceived to be his ideas, and had already condemned, without knowing his system. They had taken up certain resolutions passed by the proprietors of East India stock, and had said, that a system founded upon them must necessarily be defective, must necessarily be charged with more influence, accompanied with less

energy, than the bill which had been rejected. He knew the triumph which he should afford to a certain description of men, when he informed the house, that the plan which he proposed to submit to parliament was chiefly founded on the resolutions of the proprietors of India stock, and that his ideas in all the great points coincided with theirs. He anticipated in his mind the clamour which would take place on this discovery, and the vociferous acclamations of those gentlemen ranged behind the right honorable member, (Mr. Fox,) whose signals they were always disposed to obey, and whose mandates they were always ready to execute. He perfectly understood the nature of their conduct: he knew well how capable they would be of deciding on the subject, from the notices they would receive, and how eagerly they would embrace the opinion which the right honorable gentleman would give them; but he was not to be intimidated from undertaking what he conceived to be for the interest of his country; and to the crime which was alledged against him, he pleaded guilty. He confessed himself to be so miserably weak and irresolute, as not to venture to introduce a bill into that house on the foundations of violence and intrenchment. He acknowledged himself to be so weak as to pay respect to the chartered rights of men, and that, in proposing a new system of government and regulation, he did not disdain to consult with those, who, having the greatest stake in the matter to be new modelled, were likely to be the best capable of giving him advice. He acknowledged the enormous transgression of acting with their consent, rather than by violence; and that in the bill he proposed to move for, he had governed himself by

the ideas of the proprietors of East India stock, and by the sense and wisdom of those men who were most habituated to the consideration of the subject, as well as the most interested in it.

“ He gave to his opponents, with perfect cheerfulness, all the advantage which this view of the subject would confer. His plan was really founded on the resolutions which the house had seen in the public newspapers, and he acted in concurrence with the sentiments of the general proprietary. He had not dared to digest a bill without consultation, which was to violate chartered rights sanctified by parliamentary acts; he had not ventured to conceive that any plan, which should erect in this country a system unknown to the constitution, would be ever embraced by any House of Commons; or, that a scheme of new and unconstitutional character, would be suffered to have an establishment, since such a scheme must give the death blow to our frame of government. He had taken notice of the objections stated by the right honorable gentleman, before had heard his plan, and accepted by his followers with the same haste and the same decency; he had heard him alledge that his plan was calculated to give as much or more influence to the crown than the bill that had been rejected; and that it was not calculated to produce the solitary consequences to this country, or to India, which his bill would have certainly done. These were the imputations which had been brought against it before it was known, and the house were now to enquire into the truth of the assertion. He wished to be tried by comparison. He challenged the trial by that test; and he trusted to the candour of the house, even circumstanced as it now

was ; he trusted to their fairness and impartiality, that if the provisions of his bill as effectual, with less violence,—affording as vigorous a system of control with less possibility of influence,—securing the possessions of the East to the public, without confiscating the property of the company,—and beneficially changing the nature of this defective government, without entrenching on the chartered rights of men, they would give him a manly, liberal, and successful support, without enquiring what party of men, or what side of the house, was to be maintained on the occasion. He trusted they could not approve his plan the less for being without violence—for being destitute of the rapidity, the grasping principle, the enormous influence, the inordinate ambition, the unconstitutional tendencies of the bill which had been rejected. He trusted also they would find, that he had not objected to the bill of the right honourable gentlemen from motives of capricious, or of personal opposition, or that he was now to seduce them into the approbation of a measure more speciously coloured, but in truth stated from that to which he had denied his assent.

“ He was not much affected with the clamour, that his was to be a *half-measure—a palliative*—although he had so loudly deprecated half-measures and palliatives on the first day of the session. *Half-measure* was the watchword of the day. He should not be affected by this charge, if by that was meant, that every measure which did not proceed to the violation of charters and the confiscation of property, was a half-measure. If he could only avoid the imputation of erecting a system of power new and unknown in the country, to the extinction of the company and the destruction of the

constitution, he would not be displeased to hear his plan receive the appellation of a half measure. But he trusted, that in the exposition of the principles of his plan, and of the provisions, they would find reasons to go with him in thinking, that without materially entrenching on the company, and without deviating from the practice of the constitution, a scheme of government might be framed, less overbearing, and equally efficacious. Whatever might be its reception, however, he should have the heartfelt pleasure of knowing that he had discharged his duty conscientiously; and he professed that he was infinitely more eager to see a fair, solid, and effectual system established, than he should be the person to propose it, as he really was more anxious for the welfare of his country than for the aggrandizement of himself.

“The general objects to be looked to, and provided for, in the formation of a system for India, were chiefly these :—

“The concerns of this country in India, in the various considerations to which they branched; the civil and military government; the revenues; the commerce; the vast territorial possessions, which, though they had been long acquired, had never yet been finally settled: there were claims to be ascertained and interests to be divided. The happiness of the natives was to be studied; the connection between the commerce and the territorial government was to be maintained; and last of all, they were to consider what were likely to be the effects of the government of India, or the government of Great Britain; how it might affect our constitution in point of influence, and how it might be rendered at once vigorous and unalarming.

“These were the objects to be considered, and surely the house would join with him in saying, they were most important. The possessions in India were great and ample; they could not be maintained but with broad and extensive establishments; they contained an immense number of the human race, for whose happiness it behoved us, by every call of humanity and policy, to provide; and there was the utmost necessity of framing a system, which should at once preserve the connection and the distinction between the territories and the commerce. This was particularly difficult, and indeed the whole business was of so complicated a kind, that it required all the wisdom, all the experience, and all the consideration of parliament.

“Any plan, which he or any man could suggest for the government of territories so extensive and so remote, must be inadequate; nature and fate had ordained, in unalterable decrees, that governments to be maintained at such a distance must be inadequate to their end. In the philosophy of politics, such a government must be declared irrational, it must be declared at the best to be inconvenient to the mother and supreme power, oppressive and inadequate to the necessities of the governed. In such a scene there could be imagined no theoretical perfection—it must be a choice of inconveniences; and therefore, he trusted that, in this examination of the ideas which he should throw out, the house would take into their view the difficulties, and and always to remember that whatever was suggested, however specious, however promising, it might be, must be tried by the event rather than by speculation. The general ideas which he had thrown out, and the objects which he had described to be in view, would

serve the house as land-marks to guide them in the consideration, and they would examine how far his propositions were calculated to answer the object.

“ In the first place then the political concerns of this country in India, that is, the civil and military government of India—the political establishments—the political system—the collection of the revenues—and to give, in one short and general definition, the imperial dominion of our territories in the east, ought to be placed under other control than that of the company of merchants in Leadenhall Street: but the change ought to be made with as little violence as possible; it ought to be made by the conviction of the company, and not by violence. In this the proprietors agreed with him. The first business then, was to take care that this should be an effectual control, and it was his clear idea, that this control, could not with safety or propriety be placed in any other hands than those of the genuine and legitimate executive council of the constitution.

“ His next principle was, that the commerce of the company should be left, as much as possible, to their own superintendence. This was an idea that must strike every thinking man; for commerce ought always to be left to the merchant, unshackled, unembarrassed by interferences which might impede its current, and diminish its security. In this, however, there was a consideration to be attended to. The commerce of the East India Company was of a mixed nature. It was involved with revenue, and it would be requisite that a provision should be made for distinguishing between what was merely commercial and what was mixed, under the colour of commercial acts,

or commercial regulation, the politics of India should not be affected.

“ This next principle was to prevent capricious effects on the constitution of Britain, from the government of India. In providing for this principle, very great delicacy was to be used in the nature, quality, and extent of the powers to be given to the governments in India. The servants in India, must obey the controlling powers at home; but, still, in regard to the distance from the controlling power, care must be taken to arm them with such discretionary authority, as should leave energy and vigour for all the purposes of good and substantial government, sufficient to secure the happiness of the natives, as well as to protect the commerce and the possessions, but at the same time so limited as to restrain inordinate ambition—to crush oppressive rapacity—to extinguish the jobbing of adventure—and to establish true and equitable dominion.

“ He understood well that it was more easy to exhibit principles than adopt provisions; and he only exhibited them to serve as land-marks to the house in the examination of his provisions; for he should succeed or fail in his plan in so far as he reached or came short of these ideas.

“ The first point, then, in the plan was to ascertain the degree of control which should be established over the company, and the hands in which that control should be placed. The degree of control should amount to the government of the civil and military concerns, and of the revenue, and this was a species of control not new; for we had already seen a control over the company established in the hands of government. But

the former interference of ministers had not been beneficial, because it had not been active or vigilant. On this account was it that the right honourable gentleman in his bill had placed it in new hands? Was it on this account that he had vested the control in the hands of a set of men, whose character was a monster and a novelty in the constitution? What security had parliament that this new and unheard of board would have been more active and vigilant than a constitutional and executive one? Surely none but the character, the integrity, the intelligence, and the alacrity of the individuals who composed it. If men could be found by the executive government of the country equally endowed, he asked if the security to the public was not the same?

“ But he must again take notice here of the imputation, which, he imagined, would be thrown on his plan for its moderation in this respect. It would be called a *half measure*, because it left with the company many of their rights, their property, their patronage, their respect : but he saw no aspersion in the term of a half measure, if his plan was to be so termed in opposition to the totallity of that scheme which grasped at every thing which they enjoyed. This grasped at no more than what was essential to the object, and he with confidence trusted to the impartiality of the house of commons, that they would approve of a measure calculated to effect all the purposes required, by means less violent than those of the late plan ; and he had this confidence, notwithstanding the impression of the times, which he confessed to be new and extraordinary. His plan aimed at beneficial control. He

meant not to rob or to steal the rights of the company.

“He knew that the merits of his plan must be comparative; and that the house would give the preference to that, which, in the comparison, was proved to be the test in the two great points of sufficiency and vigilance of control. The public required security. What was the security they had in the projected board of commissioners? Was it the greatness of their character, or the circumstance of their being appointed by the house on the nomination of the minister? If this was all, might not others be found as great in character, and found constitutionally, by the executive power? And would it be a less recommendation of such men that they were not a new and independant institution, unknown to the constitution and uncontrollable by the crown? The persons that had the control, should be persons capable of giving time and attention to the objects of the trust—they should have leisure for activity and exertion, that it should be no longer subject to the imputation of a sleepy and ineffectual control, but deserve the character of an active and efficacious one. But this could not be done, perhaps, without the creation of new officers; for, in the present state of administration, the ministers through whom the crown should speak, that is, the two secretaries of state, were so occupied as not to be able to give all the time and attention which would be necessary to provide for this; there should be joined to the minister other assistance to expedite the affairs that they might not be delayed or neglected, at the same time that the crown’s control was signified through a minister.

“His proposal, therefore, was, ‘That a board should be instituted, to be appointed by his Majesty, consisting of one of the principal secretaries of state, the chancellor of the exchequer for the time, and a certain number of the privy council.’ The number of the board be left blank for the consideration of the house. The privy counsellors were not to be as in the constitution of the privy council itself, to attend precariously; but such as his Majesty appointed were to give regular attendance at this board, and devote their time and study to its objects. But it might be asked, were there to be salaries given to the members of this new board, and was it to be productive of additional burthens to the people? He knew that in the last bill, though there was no salary mentioned, it was the general rumour, if not the general intention, that they should have a remuneration. It was his idea, however, that in the present establishment, any expence might be avoided. There were in this country a number of persons, who from their rank, were members of the privy council, and who at the same time were possessed of great and distinguished offices, with large emoluments and little labour. There was no doubt but a number of such persons might be found to accept of this important duty without any additional reward. It was what they owed to the country, from which they derived splendid incomes for no services, and he was sure that if it fell to his lot—which was a question to be decided—he would think it his indispensable duty, and would give up his time and attention most cordially to the object.

“A board thus constituted, it might be imagined, would have the qualities of activity and vigour. It

would be derived constitutionally from the executive power. It would create no new office of emolument. It would load the subject with no new burthen. It would be as efficacious as the board of seven commissioners. That board undoubtedly was composed of men of great integrity and fair honour; but he might be allowed to add, some of them not possessing much knowledge of, or interest in, the subject of their control. But this new board would be at least equally intelligent and efficacious. It would be as good only with this difference, that the rights of no company would be violated, only with this difference, that they would not be uncontrolled or uncontrollable;—only with this difference, that they would not possess the whole of the patronage, to the great danger of British liberty. The dispatches of the company must be submitted to this board, and be made subject to their control, their opinion to be given in a reasonable and competent time, and the dispatches countersigned by the board, by which a complete responsibility was vested in them. This was no ambiguous system—it was clear, public, and administrative.

“In the next place, though he had no wish to interfere with, much less to control, the commerce of the company, yet as the commercial arts might be connected with the political, because they might have an aspect leaning both to the one and to the other, he also proposed, ‘That all the commercial dispatches of the company should also be submitted to the board whose control should be signified in a reasonable and competent time; but the court of directors, if they agreed not with the opinion of the board on the decision of the question, whether it had a political or merely a

commercial question, might appeal to the king in his council, whose decision should be final.' This he hoped would not be considered as a security nominal and frivolous, when it is remembered that this was to be a public appeal and a public trial. He was sincere in his ideas on the subject of the security ; and, being so, he regarded neither the sneers nor the smiles of gentlemen : this appeal he considered as a guard to the company, and chiefly because it was liable to be discussed in both houses of parliament.

" This board possessed not the patronage of the company. They had the power of a negative, indeed, but they could not alter the names sent by the company ; they could not make use of this power in the way of patronage, for it was his idea that this should be a board of political control, and not, as the former was, a board of political influence. He stated what the constitution of that board was, and what the constitution of this was to be. That board was to seize on the rights, patronage, commerce, and property of the company. This left to the company the uncontrolled possession of their commerce, their treasury, their patronage, their contracts, the appointment of writers and cadets ; by which, in the course of things, all the officers and servants in India were in their immediate appointment.

" He then came to state what was to be the nature of the government abroad ; ' Their authority should have the power of large discretion, accompanied with the restraint of responsibility.' They should be bound to obey the orders of the board at home, but at the same time, they should have a sufficient quantity of power for all the purposes of emergency, and all the

occasions which the immense distance might give rise to. He went into a long detail to shew how much the influence created by the last bill, exceeded the influence of this. Here the government abroad could at best select from among the appointments of the company—they could not make original appointments of their own. In addition to this, there was in the crown, and consequently in the two houses, by an address to the crown, the power of recal.

“It was to be enquired by whom the members of the councils abroad were to be appointed. The company had cheerfully yielded this point also to the crown. He, however, had his doubts on this subject, and therefore in his bill, the matter should be left for the wisdom of the house to decide; but ‘the appointment of the commander-in-chief he thought should be clearly in the crown,’ for the duties which he had to fulfil were so essentially connected with the great operations of the state, that there could be no doubt on his appointment.

“The next consideration was the number of councils abroad. His idea was, ‘that their number should be four, the governor-general to have the casting vote.’ But this also he would leave to the house. The number of the council at Bengal he did not mean to reduce; for in this he followed the example of the right honourable gentleman, in not making the system a personal question.

“The late bill thought fit to vest all the power in the government here, and none or little in the government abroad. His idea was otherwise. He thought there should be a power in the government abroad, large and broad, but guarded with responsibility.

“ He proposed that there should be ‘ a revision of all the establishments in India, to see where retrenchments might be made with safety—to see what were necessary, what were useful, and what, on account of their inutility, inconvenience, corruption, or abuse, ought to be extinguished.’ This he recommended, for he believed that many of the abuses in India arose from the establishments being overloaded.

“ Another reform struck him as essential, and which indeed was only the enforcement of an old rule. This was, ‘ that all appointments in India should take place by gradation and succession.’ Influence would by this means be very much diminished; and indeed, without entering much into the nature and amount of the power, he imagined the government might be framed to possess all that was necessary to its purposes, without having so much as to create influence. He would speak only therefore of the great lines of power, without entering into the little detail.

“ His last proposition, he said, was, ‘ That there should be erected a new tribunal for the trial of offences in India.’ He explained the necessity of such an institution, and said, it would be for the wisdom of the house to determine, its nature and authority. His idea was, that it should consist of a number of the principal persons in Westminster Hall in the first place; that civilians should also be joined; and also a number of peers, and a number of the members of the house of commons. A tribunal thus constructed might, in his idea, embrace the great object. The culprit might have the power of challenging; and, before this tribunal, evidence might be admitted which the courts of law could not receive. They should be directed to

question, to arraign; they should determine the nature of offences; and in offences he would reckon the disobedience of orders, the acceptance of presents, oppression of the natives, monopolies, rapacities, and all the train of offences which had tainted the national character in India. They should enquire into the personal fortunes of the delinquents; they should have the power of confiscation, and every thing but capital power. In regard to the Zemindars, though he admired the spirit of the right honourable gentleman towards them, yet he could not imitate it, on account of its impracticability. General indiscriminate restitution was as bad as indiscriminate confiscation. He proposed therefore, ' That an enquiry should be instituted into the confiscations, for the purpose of restoring such as had been irregularly and unjustly seized; and that they should be secured against violence in future.'

" He had taken notice of many more points, he said, than were included in his motion; but he had thrown them out for the consideration of the house, as a subsequent bill must be brought in for regulations, or, what he believed would be effectual, the bill of the right honourable gentleman now in the house might be modified to his purpose. He again gave a comparison between his bill and that which had been thrown out: and he declared that the establishment of a moderate and effectual system of government for India was the great and immediate object of his mind. He did not wish to gratify young ambition by the places to which he was called; he was not attached to his eminence. ' I am not,' said Mr. Pitt, ' governed at this moment by motives of personal interest, or of personal fame. I

have introduced this plan as the deliberate conviction of my mind, made up on the most serious consideration of the most intelligent men. Accept the ideas, if they are worth your notice; strengthen them with your wisdom; mature them with your experience; or, in their room, establish a more adequate system, and I am happy.

‘However unpleasant to me a majority of this house, and insinuations against me, must be, I shall incur the danger of them all on this great point—establish a good, rational, and safe system, and dispose of me as you will. I have the consciousness of a good intention, and therefore, without having the serious fear, that personal considerations will be imputed to me; I conclude with moving, That leave be given to bring in a bill for the better regulation of India concerns.’

Such is the ground-work of the law by which the affairs of India are ruled to this day; although, in the first instance, by means of the majority already mentioned, it was rejected. (Jan. 23.)

It is unnecessary to offer any further declaration of Mr. Pitt’s sentiments on the subject of his assumption of the reins of government, desirous as we are of enabling him to deliver them in his own language, at once so perspicuous and elegant.

On the 18th of February, however, the subject of the supplies came to be considered, and Mr. Pitt first thought it necessary to inform the house, that notwithstanding its frequent petitions and motions, the ministry remained as before.

This provoked the astonishment of Mr. Fox, who, in consequence moved an adjournment, delivering himself with much violence against the minister.

Mr. Pitt then said, " he found himself called upon to say a few words on the very extraordinary speech which had been just delivered by the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Fox) opposite to him. A great part of what had been said was evidently founded in a misconception of what had been stated previous to the debate. He was in the recollection of the house, and would appeal to all who heard him, whether he had stated what he said, as a message from his Majesty. The truth was, that he had not signified any immediate communication with the throne on the subject; and in order to put the subject out of doubt, he would repeat his words, and leave the house to judge of their accuracy: ' That his Majesty had not thought proper to dismiss his ministers, in obedience to the resolutions of the house, and that his ministers had not resigned.' This declaration he stood pledged to make previous to the present discussion, and he thought it his duty to state what he had done; but he little apprehended such a use could have been made of it. He meant it only as an intimation of the present situation of ministry, that they were precisely in the same predicament that had produced the resolutions which had been submitted to the consideration of his Majesty. The right honourable gentleman, however, had, with his usual eloquence and ingenuity, laboured this as a direct answer from the throne. He, for his own part, wished as much to bring the question to an issue as the right honourable gentleman affected to dread it.

" An attempt was made to colour the putting off of the supplies, as if it was only the pause of a moment, and that this pause was occasioned by a circumstance which the house had not foreseen, and which put the

house, the country, and public affairs, in quite a new situation. Allowing all this to be true, which he would not allow but for the sake of argument, how could such an explanation of things put a dispute on facts which the least discernment might see through? The supplies were, to all intents and purposes, stopped. The right honourable gentleman affects to call it postponing, but he trusted the people of this country would see that the trick attempted to be put upon them and on this house, was too hollow to have effect. It could not, he was well persuaded, succeed against the good sense of the people of the country. But why would not gentlemen come openly and plainly forward? He was sure no man would doubt that he allowed the right to the house of commons of withholding the supplies, whenever the circumstances of the case would justify such a measure; but he was in hopes no man would say the present was a crisis of that kind. The right honourable gentleman, conscious of the fact, was very prudently and consistently averse to push the question. It was then only that the conduct of his Majesty's ministers could be fully investigated. It was on this ground, and for this end, he would urge the going into that question; and he challenged those on the other side to meet it fairly, openly, and without disguise or subterfuge. For in this discussion, the different motives of the contending parties would be obvious; and he would say, with the utmost confidence and sincerity, that it was a decision he could urge, and for which he was anxious, as he knew from the temper and principles of the house, they would be shy indeed, in the present state of the country, to withhold those supplies on which the harmony and energy

of government depended, and for which the national faith was pledged.

“ Many of the right honourable gentleman’s arguments had been addressed personally to him, but with what propriety gentlemen of feeling and delicacy would judge. There were points in personal honour which no man of spirit could for any object whatever forego; and whatever were his connexions or attachments, he hoped never to forfeit feelings, without which he could not retain consistently any opinion of himself. He would therefore declare once for all, that he considered his personal honour deeply and inseparably concerned in the present situation which he held, and that he would not on any account, or by any means, first resign, and then stoop to negotiate; that was, leave his place in order to make part of a new administration. What! would he tell the world by such a step as this that he was capable of sacrificing any thing to the love of situation! No. It did not become him to trifle in this manner, either with his own character, or his Majesty’s confidence. But “ at present he held a connexion with persons who contaminated him.” Would this be any where else believed? And what was the meaning of all those personalities so repeatedly pointed to him, but that he should relinquish one set of men in whom he trusted, and knew he could trust with safety, for another—that he should be obliged, for a paltry share in office, to sacrifice his personal feelings, and treat those with whom he had been long in habits of intimacy and esteem, with a neglect which bordered on perfidy? He was convinced the house and the public did not expect him to be capable of purchasing the honour of office at so dear a rate.

These were his ultimate sentiments, on a subject about which he had been much pressed, and he hoped they would be considered as final."

The house adjourned with the voice of a small majority.

As the best picture of the prevailing circumstances of the times, and of the manly dignity and inviolable perseverance of Mr. Pitt, the following speech is finally given.

On the 20th of February the attack upon administration was commenced by Mr. Powys, who reviewing what had been already done, moved as usual, "That this house, impressed with the most dutiful sense of his Majesty's paternal regard for the welfare of his people, relies on his Majesty's royal wisdom, that he will take such measures as will tend to give effect to the wishes of his faithful commons, which have already most humbly represented to his Majesty, by removing any obstacle to forming such an administration as the house has declared to be requisite in the present critical and arduous situation of affairs."

Mr. Pitt succeeded Mr. Fox in the debate, as follows:—

"The right honourable gentleman, Sir, has gone through so vast an expanse of matter, he has embarked the house in so wide an ocean of politics, that it is impossible for me to follow him through the whole course of his speech. I beg leave, however, while both the house and myself are fresh in the remembrance of it, to press upon them again what the right honourable gentleman himself, at the close of his speech, has this day at last been driven to confess, though I had long laboured, and, as I began to fear, had laboured in vain to

convince him of it ; namely, that if the right honorable gentleman and the noble lord in the blue ribbon, should regain their situation, should expel all his Majesty's present ministers, and resume their old measures, their restoration would not ensure the restoration of peace, and of content to this distracted country. The right honourable gentleman now confesses it ; and yet, Sir, he ought also to confess, and to know and feel, that his present measures do most directly tend to the re-establishment of that coalition, to the certain exclusion of his Majesty's present ministers, and to that very calamity, which he himself now begins to dread, and with the dread of which, I had so strenuously endeavored to inspire the house. Procrastination was now become his plan. I wish not to be understood as calling for violent measures ; but this I will say, that merely to temporise is no man's duty at the present moment. If, therefore, every violence is intended against this administration, let us not keep the country in suspense, but let us advance like men to the issue of this combat ; the present question is weak and feeble, compared with those which have gone before it ; and I dare say, therefore, every gentleman must expect that it will be without effect.

“ The right honourable gentleman, Sir, has appeared to-night in a character perfectly new to him, but which he has supported (as, indeed, he supports every one of his characters) with wonderful dexterity : he is to-night the champion of the majority of this house against the voice of the people. Imposture was the word used by his learned friend ; the right honourable gentleman improves upon the idea, and tells you that imposture was a word used merely by way of

civility; it is by way of complimenting the people of England, that the right honourable gentleman says their opinions are founded in imposture; and then, by way of libelling these addresses, and of libelling this reign, he recals to your mind the addresses offered in the infamous reign of king Charles the Second, affecting to furnish the house with a case somewhat in point, and warning them not to trust at all to the most unanimous addresses of the people of England, by summarily mentioning those which were offered to that monarch, requesting the crown to take into its hands and protection the several charters of this country. Sir, I beg these allusions may not pass off unexplained: the case was this.—After many cruel and scandalous decisions in the courts against chartered companies, in a fit of desperation, the several corporations offered their charters to the crown, as the only protection against this tyranny; and shall I hear this cited by way of libelling addresses of the people at this time? I believe in truth, Sir, the right honourable gentleman is surprised and exasperated at the manly spirit of the people in these times, who will not wait till their charters are prostituted to the purposes of ministers, and then seek relief by yielding them to the crown; but who boldly resist the violation in the first instance, and who are as hardy in their resistance, as the right honourable gentleman has been in his attack.

“ But, says the right honourable gentleman, how should the people understand the India bill? Do they know all the abuses in India? True, Sir, the people may not, have read all your voluminous reports, neither, perhaps, have one half of the members of this house read them; but, Sir, they know that no abuses

in India—that the very loss of India—that the annihilation of India could not compensate for the ruin of this constitution. The plain sense of this country could see that objection to the India bill, which I could never persuade the right honourable gentleman to advert to: they could see, that it raised up a new power in this constitution, that it stripped at once the crown of its prerogative, and the people of their chartered rights, and that it created that right honourable gentleman to be the dictator of his king and his country. But, Sir, the right honourable gentleman venturing still to deny that the addresses have sufficiently marked what is the opinion of the people; and then he talks of battles at Reading, of battles at Hackney, and battles at Westminster. At Reading, Sir, I understand there was no battle; the county addressed unanimously against the opinion and in the face of its members, although the honourable member (Major Hartley) assures you he now exerted his oratory to deprecate the address. As for Hackney, I behold over against me a most valiant chieftain (Mr. Byng) who is just returned from that field of Mars, whose brow, indeed, is not, as before, adorned with the smile of victory, but from whose mouth I doubt not we shall hear a faithful, although, alas! Sir, a most lamentable history of that unfortunate flight and defeat. Whether at Westminster it is sufficient proof of victory to say, “the people would not even hear me;” whether that right honourable gentleman, who once could charm the multitude into dumb admiration of his eloquence, and into silent gratitude for his exertions in the cause of freedom, and of his country; whether he, the champion of the people, once emphatically named the

“man of the people,” is now content with the execrations of those multitudes, who once, perhaps, too much adored him; whether, in short, Sir, the sonorous voice of my noble friend was a host itself, or whether it might not have become a host by being joined to the host of the voices around him; all these are points I will not decide: but sure I am, that the right honourable gentleman will not persuade me that the voice of the people is with him if Westminster is his only example. There is one thing the right honourable gentleman proves merely by strong affirmations, to which, therefore, I can oppose affirmations as strong on my part: he says his late majorities have been composed of men the most independent in their principles, respectable in their situations, and honourable for their connexions. I can only affirm as roundly in answer, that the minority is by no means inferior to them, in point either of principles, of respectability, or of independence. Having thus disposed of the people and the minority of the house of commons, large as it certainly is, the right honourable gentleman proceeds next to dispose of the majority in the house of lords, and he denies that they were respectable. Sir, if the right honourable gentleman will trouble himself with this kind of calculation, I am not afraid to match the majority there against the minority, either on the score of independence, of property, of long hereditary honours, of knowledge of the law and the constitution, or on the score of any thing that can give respect and dignity to peerage. And, Mr. Speaker, when I look near me, [looking at Mr. Pratt] when I see near whom I am now standing, I am not afraid to place, in the front of that battle, (for at that battle the noble peer

whom I allude to, was not afraid to buckle on his old armour, and march forth, as if inspired with his youthful vigour, to the charge) I say, Sir, I am not afraid to place foremost, at the head and in the very front of that battle, that noble and illustrious peer (Lord Camden) venerable as he is for his years, venerable for his abilities, adored and venerated through this country on account of his veneration for this glorious constitution, high in rank and honour, and possessing, as he does, in these tumultuous times, an equanimity and dignity of mind that render him infinitely superior to that wretched party spirit, with which the world may fancy us to be infected.

“ But, Sir, I am carried too far ; my warm admiration of the subject has hurried me into expressions, perhaps, not perfectly becoming the strictness of this debate. The point which I should particularly speak to, and the great subject of contention between us, is, whether I shall resign, in order afterwards to return into office ; and the example of the noble lord in the blue ribbon is held out for my imitation ; for he, it is said, is willing to sacrifice his personal pretensions for the sake of unanimity. Good God ! Mr. Speaker, can any thing that I have said, subject me to be branded with the imputation of preferring my personal situation to the public happiness ? Sir, I have declared again and again, only prove to me that there is any reasonable hope, shew me but the most distant prospect, that my resignation will at all contribute to restore peace and happiness to the country, and I will instantly resign. But, Sir, I declare at the same time, I will not be induced to resign as a preliminary to negotiation. I will not abandon this situation in order

to throw myself upon the mercy of that right honourable gentleman. He calls me now a mere nominal minister, the mere puppet of secret influence. Sir, it is because I will not become a mere nominal minister of his creation; it is because I disdain to become the puppet of that right honourable gentleman, that I will not resign: neither shall his contemptuous expressions provoke me to resignation: my own honour and reputation I never will resign. That I am now standing on the rotten ground of secret influence I will not allow; nor yet will I quit this ground, in order to put myself, as the right honourable gentleman calls it, under his protection, in order to accept of the nomination at his hands, and in order to become a poor self-condemned, helpless, unprofitable minister in his train—a minister, perhaps some way serviceable to that right honourable gentleman, but totally unserviceable to my king and to my country. If I have, indeed, submitted to become the puppet and minion of the crown, why should that right honourable gentleman condescend to receive me into his band? It seems, however, that I have too much of the personal confidence of my Sovereign, and that I must resign, in order to return into administration, having only an equal share of it with others. But the right honourable gentleman knows that my appointment would, in that case, be only as a “piece of parchment.” Admit that I have more than my share of the king’s confidence, yet how is my being out of office for two days to make any diminution of that confidence? The right honourable gentleman therefore, every moment contradicts his own principles, and he knows that if I were first to resign, in the forlorn hope of returning as an efficient minister into administration, I should

become the mere sport and ridicule of my opponent; nay, and forfeit also the good opinion of those, by whose independant support I am now honoured: for when I shall have sacrificed my reputation for that support which I am told shall arise to me from that right honourable gentleman's protection, when I shall have bartered my honour for his great connexions, what shall I become but the slave of his connexions, the sport and tool of a party? for a while, perhaps, the minister appointed by that party, but no longer useful to my country, or myself independent.

“ The right honourable gentleman tells you, Sir, that he means to stop the supplies again to-night, but that he shall only postpone them occasionally. He stopped them at once, because the king did not listen to the voice of his commons, he now ceases to stop them, though the same cause still exists. Now, Sir, what is all this but a mere useless bravado?—a bravado calculated to alarm the country, but totally ineffectual for the object for which it was intended. I grant, indeed, with him, that if all the money destined to pay the public creditors is voted, one great part of the mischief is avoided. But, Sir, let not this house think it a small thing to stop the money for all public services; let us not think that, while such prodigious sums of money flow into the public coffers, without being suffered to flow out again, the circulation of wealth in the country will be stopped nor the public credit affected. It has been said, indeed, “ how is it possible that parliament should trust public money in the hands of those, in whom they have expressly declared they cannot confide?” Is there any thing then in my character so flagitious; am I, the chief minister

of the treasury, so suspected of alienating the public money to my own, or any sinister purpose, that I am not to be trusted with the ordinary issues? [a cry of "No! No!"]—Why then, Sir, if they renounce the imputation, let them renounce the argument. By what I am now going to say, perhaps I may subject myself to the invidious imputation of being the minister and friend of prerogative; but, Sir, notwithstanding those terms of obloquy with which I am assailed, I will not shrink from avowing myself the friend of the king's just prerogative. Prerogative, Sir, has been justly called a part of the rights of the people, and sure I am it is a part of their rights, which the people were never more disposed to defend, of which they were never more jealous than at this hour. Grant only this, that this house has a negative in the appointment of ministers, and you transplant the executive power into this house. Sir, I shall call upon gentlemen to speak out; let them not come to resolution after resolution, without stating the grounds on which they act; for there is nothing more dangerous among mixed powers than that one branch of the legislature should attack another by means of hints and auxiliary arguments, urged only in debate, without daring to avow the direct grounds on which they go, and without stating in plain terms, on the face of their resolutions, what are their motives, and what are their principles which lead them to come to such resolutions. Above all, Sir, let this house beware of suffering any individual to involve his own cause, and to interweave his own interests in the resolutions of the house of commons. The dignity of the house is for ever appealed to: let us beware that personal prejudices have no share in deciding these

constitutional questions. The right honourable gentleman is possessed of those enchanting arts whereby he can give grace to deformity; he holds before your eyes a beautiful and delusive vision; he pushes it forward to your observation; but as sure as you embrace it, the pleasing vision will vanish, and this fair phantom of liberty will be succeeded by anarchy, confusion and ruin to the constitution. For, in truth, Sir, if the constitutional independance of the crown is thus reduced to the very verge of annihilation, where is the boasted equipoise of the constitution? Where is that balance among the three branches of the legislature which our ancestors have measured out to each with so much precision? Where is the independance—nay where is even the safety of any one prerogative of the crown, or even of the crown itself, if its prerogative of naming ministers is to be occupied by this house, or if, (which is precisely the same thing) its nomination of them is to be negatived by us without stating any one ground of distrust in the men, and without suffering ourselves to have any experience of their measures? Dreadful therefore as the conflict is, my conscience, my duty, my fixed regard for the constitution of our ancestors, maintain me still in this arduous situation. It is not any proud contempt or defiance of the constitutional resolution of this house; it is no personal point of honour; much less is it any lust of power that makes me cling to office: the situation of the times requires of me, and I will add, my country calls aloud to me, that I will defend this castle; and I am determined, therefore, I WILL defend it!”

Notwithstanding this energetic and sensible decla-

ration of his principles, Mr. Pitt yet remained in a minority and the address to the king was ordered to be presented to the throne by the whole house.

A gracious answer was the result, in which his Majesty differed from his faithful commons in the means of attaining the end they had in view. It was the cause of another address which, however, did not succeed any better than the former; on the 24th of March, the parliament was prorogued, and dissolved the following day.

This is the first time we can view Mr. Pitt as the efficient minister of the British empire. Whatever his talents or whatever the distinction he had obtained in his country, it is now only that we have an opportunity of examining his principles and his motives at leisure from the turbulence of faction and contentions of the most unworthy kind.

We are now arrived at that period to which we have hitherto bent our notice. The struggles of party offer no evidence whereby to judge of character and talents, any more than the regular temperament of nature is to be discovered in a tempest. Till these were past, or at least so far subdued, as to leave to the hand guiding the helm of government that power only to be maintained by a decided majority in parliament, it has been judged best to withhold from those minor circumstances which are interesting only as the traits of human nature; or what, in this volume, is more important, for those examinations of the state of affairs which, by guiding us to the true character of Mr. Pitt's motives and principles of government, may enable us to judge of their excellence or deficiency,

and to offer their experience to the acceptance or rejection of his successors.

In this we are much gratified in being able to call to our assistance the sentiments of those the best able to judge in every part of his conduct. With these we shall preface whatever of our own has occurred to its illustration, as well as those facts which mark the state of the country at the same time.

“Without dwelling,” says his eulogist,* “upon the circumstances of his introduction into parliament, I shall observe that at once, and from the first, he displayed a brilliancy of eloquence, a maturity of understanding, and a correctness of judgment, which excited the utmost astonishment in those who had been accustomed to consider these qualities, even in an inferior degree, as the late acquisition of age and experience. And let it be remembered, that among the persons who expressed the greatest surprise, were many who had long witnessed and admired the hitherto unequalled talents of the *immortal Chatham*. Before he had completed his twenty-fourth year, the first political situation in this country was offered to him. Instead of eagerly catching at this dazzling offer, which was made in terms best calculated to produce this effect, he resolutely declined it. He saw that, from the state of parties, he could not accept it with advantage to his king and country; and thus he gave an early proof of that principle which was the invariable rule of his subsequent conduct. In a few months, however, a consi-

* Speech of W. E. Pretyman Tomline, in Trin. Coll. Chap. Dec. 17, 1806.

derable change in political affairs took place, and, upon a renewal of the offer, he perceived that the same motive which had before induced him to decline, now called upon him to accept this high, and at his age, unprecedented honor. The love of power is a ruling passion in the human mind, and is, perhaps, inseparable from the consciousness of great abilities : it is a virtue or a vice, a blessing or a curse, according to the motives which excite, and the means which are used to gratify it. Under the direction of sound principle, it has been productive of the greatest national benefit ; but, under an opposite influence, it has been the cause of a large share of the public misery and distress, which at various periods have afflicted the inhabitants of the world.

“ In the struggle which ensued, and which was attended with circumstances so unparalleled in the history of parliament, Mr. Pitt evinced a firmness of character, and a determined perseverance in what he believed and knew to be right, which at length triumphed over every difficulty. In contending for the prerogative of the crown, he gained the favor of the people in an unexampled degree. By an appeal to the exertions of the House of Commons, it was proved that Englishmen are not more jealous of their own rights than of the rights of their sovereign ; and that they consider those as the true friends of our invaluable constitution, who are careful to preserve to all its parts their respective privileges and functions. They well knew that if the equilibrium be once destroyed, the ruin of the whole must quickly follow : they distinguished between real patriotism and lawless ambition. Among the numerous marks of public approbation

which Mr. Pitt at this time received from every part of the kingdom, there was none upon which he set a greater value, than the being chosen representative of this university; he felt the warmest attachment to the place of his education; and to be peculiarly entrusted with the interests of religion and learning, could not but be highly gratifying to his enlightened mind.

“ He now entered upon a new scene. Animated by the favor of his sovereign, and encouraged by the support of the people, he determined to devote his whole time and thoughts to the momentous duties of his office. Here let us pause a moment, to consider whether the situation of the country afforded any alluring prospect to a young and inexperienced minister.

“ If we reflect that a new arrangement of the affairs of the East India company was indispensably necessary, and that this had been ineffectually attempted both by himself and his immediate predecessors, and had already produced eager contests in parliament; if we reflect that a long and disastrous war, recently concluded, had left the country impoverished and exhausted; that its income was by no means equal to the expenditure of a peace establishment, and that a large and accumulating debt remained totally unprovided for; if we reflect upon the inefficiency of his coadjutors, and upon the splendid talents, powerful eloquence, and commanding influence of his opponents,—we must surely acknowledge that Mr. Pitt had no ordinary difficulties to surmount. But the energy of his mind ever rose with the occasion,—dangers never depressed, difficulties never embarrassed him.

“ He first digested and established a plan, which has not only given security to our possessions in the East,

but has contributed to the extension of our territory and trade, and has guarded against speculation and corruption, to which such distant concerns are peculiarly liable: and these objects were accomplished without any violation of chartered rights, or any unconstitutional addition of ministerial patronage. This great business being completed, he directed his principal attention to finance; and by selecting proper objects for new taxation, by introducing a variety of important regulations which rendered the old taxes more productive, and by correcting frauds and abuses which had long prevailed in the collection of the revenue, he made the income of the country fully competent to satisfy every demand, and raised public credit from the low state to which it had been depressed. He rested not here: the danger from the national debt, continually increasing in every year of war, and in some years of peace, had been long seen and acknowledged; but no minister had yet dared to take any effectual step for its liquidation. This debt had now risen to so enormous an amount, that it was generally believed another war must inevitably occasion public bankruptcy. No one was more strongly impressed with this idea, no one more ready to avow it, than Mr. Pitt himself. Hence various projects for preventing this incalculable evil were communicated to him by ingenious and speculative men; but, after a careful and impartial examination, he rejected them all as inadequate and impracticable. Instead of any of these visionary schemes, which would rather have aggravated than lessened the evil, he adopted that plain and simple mode, the suggestion of his own mind, the wisdom and efficacy of which have been incontrovertibly

proved by the experience of more than twenty years. In the course of this long period, its operation has been uniform and regular; no revisal, no alteration, has been necessary; no improvement either in the principle, or in the application of the principle, has been even attempted. In the progress of this measure through the House of Commons, its merits were so obvious, as to extort the commendation and support of those who acted in systematic opposition to government; and this unanimous concurrence in parliament was prophetic of that universal admiration which it has since obtained among all political parties, and all descriptions of men.

“ But the active and comprehensive mind of this truly wonderful man was not content with relieving his country from the pressure of present burthens: he formed another plan, so exclusively his own, that the idea seems never to have entered the thoughts of any other person. By this plan it was made absolutely impossible to contract any new debt, without at the same time providing the means of discharging it within a moderate number of years. Having by his former sinking fund removed all danger arising from the existing debt incurred by past wars, by this new sinking fund, which was so contrived that it must necessarily increase with the increasing debt, he obviated, as far as the nature of the thing will admit, the danger to be apprehended from the expenses of all future wars to the latest period of time. Can a more perfect system of finance be conceived by the imagination of man? Can human foresight be directed to a more useful political purpose? To the united effect of these two measures we are indebted for the power of carrying on

that contest in which we have now been engaged for nearly fourteen years in defence of the liberty and independence of our country.

“That nothing might be wanting to our internal welfare, he was studious to improve our resources, by giving every possible encouragement to trade, navigation, and manufactures; and to the wisdom and policy of his regulations upon those important points, the commercial part of the community has been ever ready to bear the amplest testimony. Never, perhaps, was there a more favorable change in the general situation of any country, than in the first nine years of Mr. Pitt’s administration. The dejection and gloom which hung over this kingdom at the beginning of that period, were gradually dispelled, and were succeeded by a degree of prosperity far beyond the most sanguine expectations.”

Of this view of circumstances there can be no doubt. To the right reverend relation of the present orator, Mr. Pitt owed his highest acquisitions; and between them subsisted to the last moments of his valuable life the closest, the most honorable intimacy. From the pen of the Bishop of Lincoln himself, it has been hoped that the public would be favored with some record of his great and extraordinary pupil. But his is the grief that never dies!—and this funeral oration pronounced in the university of which its subject was a member, to which even in life he was already so dear, as that a sum little short of eight thousand pounds had been readily subscribed towards a statue in honor of him, may, therefore, be considered as all which pious friendship, and zealous talents, overwhelmed in affliction, can accord.

There is little to add to it, except the minor circumstances, which the public journals, and some less fleeting memorials afford.

According to these, on the 26th of January, in the present year (1784) a meeting was held at the St. Alban's Tavern, at which a committee was formed of the following gentlemen,—the Hon. Mr. Grosvenor, the Hon. Charles Walsbam, Sir William Lemon, and Mr. Powys, to confer with the leaders of the great political powers by which the nation was agitated. An address was signed by fifty-three members of the House of Commons, recommending an union to this effect, which was presented to the Duke of Portland and Mr. Pitt. The latter expressed a willingness to enter into the views of the committee, but the Duke of Rutland inserting that, as a preliminary, he should resign his place, the negociation was suspended. The duke was afterwards invited to a conference with Mr. Pitt, at the express desire of the King, for the purpose of forming a new administration on equal terms, which never took place, from Mr. Pitt refusing to come to an explanation of the term *equal*. Thus the negociation was finally terminated.

The following is from the same source:—

“ At the period when the coalition ministry was formed, Mr. Mansfield's seat for the university of Cambridge became vacant by his acceptance of the office of Solicitor General, and Mr. Pitt determined to oppose him. He accordingly went down to Cambridge, but was treated with contempt by the heads of houses and senior members. One threw the door almost in his face, and wondered at the impudence of the young man, thus to come down and disturb the

peace of the university ! The scene was now changed. He came down in triumph, was received with open arms, carried his election with a considerable majority, and was able, also, by his influence, to make Lord Euston his colleague."

The period of the Westminster election was of the most extraordinary kind. Its violence did not fail to reach even the minister himself.

The freedom of the city of London being given to Mr. Pitt, (on which occasion Mr. Wilkes addressed him in a very complimentary speech,) and that gentleman becoming a member of the grocer's company, a splendid entertainment was given in honor of him at their hall, on the 1st of March, 1784. At night, on the return of the cavalcade, a mob assembled, drew the carriages, and, on their way, broke the windows of many houses, to compel the inhabitants to illuminate. Even the palace of the prince of Wales was not spared ; and when they came to Weltjies (the prince's steward) in St. James's street, the tumult rose to a great height, Colonel North, Mr. Seymour Finch, and other gentlemen being in the house, appeared on the balcony, where they drank " Fox for ever," instead of submitting to illuminate. The populace demolished the windows, and then proceeded with the carriages to Brookes's subscription club house. Here they drew up Mr. Pitt, the Earl of Chatham, Lord Sidney, and Lord Mahon, under the windows, and again began the attack. Here also the gentlemen from the balcony positively refused to comply with their demand for lights. The mob vociferated " Pitt and the constitution." The other party returned, " Fox and a popular government. The multitude now began to assail,

the house with stones, on which the chairmen in waiting at the doors sallied out with their poles, and in a few minutes dispersed the mob. A flambeau was thrown into the carriage; on which Mr. Pitt and his companions alighted, and made good their retreat into White's. The carriage which belonged to the Earl of Chatham was broken, and order was only restored by a guard.

While Mr. Pitt (say the same sources) was out of office, his attention was unremittingly directed to the good of his country. One great cause of the distressed state of our finances, was the defalcation of the revenue by smuggling. To acquire an accurate knowledge relative to the details of this subject he bestowed much pains, attention, and expence. In the autumn of 1783, having been informed that an opportunity presented itself of obtaining very accurate and extensive information if he would go to Calais, he set out for Dover, but, on his arrival, found that, from an equinoctial storm, the streights were almost impassable. Steady, however, to his purpose, and regardless of danger, when incurred for a momentous object, he prevailed on a skipper to undertake the passage. Scarcely had they cleared the pier, when the storm became so boisterous that the skipper declared it impossible to proceed. Mr. Pitt offered him fifty guineas; but the man, not knowing his passenger, though first tempted by the offer, rejected it, in the idea that the profferer of such a sum must be running away from his country for a forgery or a murder. Mr. Pitt telling him and convincing him who he was, he at last went on, and after encountering great danger, arrived at Calais; where the facts which he had learned, and the

modes and proceedings which he discovered, were such as to be afterwards extremely useful to himself and to his country.—This was one instance, among many which might be adduced, of his steady and vigorous perseverance.

Mr. Pitt in the above excursion, visited Dunkirk, Ostend, and other sea-ports on the continent; and on his return, the most noted smuggling places on the coast of Sussex and Kent.

To return to the political course of Mr. Pitt, in which with so much vigour he displays himself, the attention of the reader is only attracted to the two grand features of the rival ministers of Britain; that which had already been displayed by Mr. Fox in his two short administrations; and that which was now opening to view under the auspices of Mr. Pitt, and on which we shall enlarge hereafter.

Leaving the two succeeding years from his accession to the helm of affairs to be employed in the manner we have seen, the trial of Mr. Hastings becomes the next object of consideration.

That gentleman, the obnoxious governor already mentioned in the affairs of India, had arrived in England in 1785, and early in the ensuing year Mr. Burke made his pre-determined efforts against him. Some difficulties occurred, arising from an injudicious defence prematurely offered at the bar of the commons by Mr. Hastings, and still more from the variety of opinions as to the modes of trial to be adopted.

Little more than the primary charge had been brought forward in 1786, but the subject was early resumed in the following year; and, on the 9th of

May, 1787, the sentiments of the minister were as follow :

Mr. Pitt said, " that he had deferred giving his sentiments on the question so long, because he found many gentlemen who were averse to the prosecution, had hitherto reserved themselves on the various stages through which the business had already passed, and had taken the present opportunity of delivering their opinions at large, upon the whole of the subject, and had then, for the first time entered into the defence of Mr. Hastings. As this seemed to be the case, he thought it was but justice to those gentlemen, to Mr. Hastings, and to the cause, to hear what they had to say without interrupting them, or anticipating their general argument in favour of Mr. Hastings, by a particular discussion of the question immediately before the house. Those gentlemen who had not taken up the question either as to the form of the articles, or the mode of proceeding, but had confined themselves solely to the broad consideration, whether Mr. Hastings was or was not guilty of crimes, sufficiently glaring to render him deserving of punishment; and this discussion had been handled in a variety of ways by the several gentlemen who had undertaken it, and all of them had gone the length of acquiring that there should be a complete and final conclusion to the whole proceeding—an opinion that he was ready to declare his own perfect and entire dissent from; for he felt himself totally at a loss to conceive how it could be reconciled, to the honour, the consistency, or the justice of that house, to stop short the sending up the impeachment to that place, where alone it ought to undergo its ultimate discussion.

“ The noble lord (Lord Hood) who had opened the debate, and the honourable magistrate who followed him, had confined themselves wholly to a collateral question, and not one immediately connected with that before the house, to the merits of Mr. Hastings, which they pleaded as a *set-off* against his offences. This was a ground which he expected and hoped would have been abandoned, after what had already passed upon that subject, both from Mr. Hastings himself, who had declaimed any such plea, and from many of the gentlemen who had delivered their opinions in the debate on the several charges. For his own part such was his opinion of many parts of the charges brought against Mr. Hastings of their importance and criminality, that he could not conceive, if they were well-founded, how the highest and the greatest merits which had ever been alleged in favour of Mr. Hastings, could be set in opposition to them as a plea even against conviction and punishment—much less against enquiry and trial, which were now the objects in question. His learned friend (the lord advocate, Mr. Dundas) had very judiciously taken a different ground, and given up that *set-off*; but still the principles he went on were no less objectionable, than those of the noble lord and the honourable alderman; he had treated the subject as if it was deficient of that consequence or magnitude which could entitle it to the judgment of that high and weighty tribunal to which it was proposed to submit it, and had besides endeavoured to oppose the farther progress of the business in that house, by analagous reasonings from the nature of this form of proceedings in parliament and that of grand juries and other courts. But he could not conceive

how any gentleman could possibly consider the charges against Mr. Hastings in any other light, than as a very grave, heavy, and serious accusation, such as was supported by evidence at least sufficient to warrant the putting him on the trial, and such as was of magnitude sufficient, if substantiated in proof, to bring down on him very ample punishment.

“As to the analogies to other inquests, the learned lord himself, and those who entertained opinions similar to his, had themselves shown how little their analogous reasonings applied, for they all seemed to go upon an idea, that the finding matter sufficient to put the party on his trial was assuming, for a certainty, that there was sufficient matter to convict. But this was by no means the case; for it was never supposed or imagined that exactly the same degree of evidence which was sufficient to warrant an impeachment of that house, must necessarily be sufficient to support and insure a conviction; neither was this the case in the finding of a grand jury: in both cases the final judicature must have proof considerably more substantial than that which the original inquest would be justifiable in proceeding upon. But it was impossible for that house to govern itself exactly by the rules of a grand jury; for the subjects that were likely to become objects of impeachment, were so different from those with which grand juries are conversant, that no apology could take place in their modes of proceedings. Besides if the house of commons were to take the proceedings of a grand jury as their precedent, and follow it exactly in all instances, it would amount to a complete dereliction of that function which had been the bulwark of the constitution, and which had

enabled that house to preserve and maintain the freedom of their country, through the severe struggles they had made for that purpose. Was that house competent to take deposition and evidence upon oath; It certainly was not; and, therefore, if it were not to proceed to an impeachment upon any other species of evidence than would justify a grand jury in finding a bill of indictment, it must never impeach at all; for a grand jury could not find it except upon affidavit. Still he admitted that the house ought never to go to such a length, as the carrying up of an impeachment, except upon such evidence as would afford a reasonable probability of their being able to make good their charge before the other house; and was there not here, from what had been produced in support of this charge and from the collateral and indirect matter, which had alone been resorted to in defence of that charge, very reasonable grounds for expecting that they should be able to make good the present?

“An honourable magistrate (Alderman Townshend) had inveighed with great severity on the conduct of gentlemen who (he thought) in support of the charge, had used expressions of too violent and personal a nature to be admitted in the progress of a judicial enquiry, he certainly was of opinion that there was much in any attempt to inflame and excite beyond what might naturally be expected to result from a fair and candid developement of facts in the minds of those who were the instruments of public justice. He admitted that he once was of opinion, that the language of those who chiefly promoted the present proceeding, was too full of ascerbity, and much too passionate and exaggerated; but when he found what the nature of

the crimes alleged was, and how strong was the presumption that the allegations were true, he confessed that he could not expect that gentlemen, when reciting what they thought actions of treachery, actions of violence and oppression, and demanding an investigation into those actions, should speak a language different from that which would naturally arise from the contemplation of such actions.

“The honourable magistrate had argued, that the honour of the house was not committed to adopt the resolutions of the committee and had endeavoured to prevent an impression from falling upon gentlemen as an inducement to their voting for them. But, was there any danger of gentlemen being influenced by such a consideration in the present case? Had the resolutions of the secret committee borne a new matter, perhaps there might then have been some room for cautioning the house not to be drawn into too hasty an adoption of them from motives of consistency, because, in such a case, these adoptions might probably be attributed to such motives; but even then such a caution must prove unnecessary; for no member could consider himself bound to support the resolutions of a committee merely because they were the resolutions of a committee. In this instance, the object of the honourable alderman ought to be to convince such gentlemen individually as had voted for the several charges that, having done so, yet they would not be inconsistent in now opposing the report; but this argument, he must say, he believed no gentleman would attempt to support; for certainly no gentleman who had supported the charges could, consistently with the principles on which he did so, now oppose the farther

progress of this business. But, in fact, he not only considered those gentlemen who had voted for the charges individually, but the whole house collectively, as called upon by every motive of honour and consistency, by their regard for the national character, as well as their own to unite and persevere in bringing the matter to a final conclusion before the other house.

“The honourable gentleman (Mr. Nathaniel Smith) who had spoken last, and who every body knew to be most conversant in the affairs of the East Indies, who had done himself so much honour in every part he had at any time taken in the management of their affairs, and who had been besides in general a strenuous opposer of the measures of Mr. Hastings, had that day made the best defence for him which he had yet heard; but still, upon the very grounds of that defence, Mr. Hastings appeared highly culpable. The principal argument which that honourable gentleman had stated in favour of Mr. Hastings, was, that a great part of those rapacious exactions which he had made in India, arose from the orders he had received from his employers, the East India Directors, who were so elated with the acquisition of the Dewaree of Bengal, and the expectations they from thence entertained of becoming the channels of vast wealth into this country, that they gave him directions for such extensive investments as could not be provided by the ordinary resources of the company, and of course drove him to the necessity of supplying by rapacity and extortion the means of fulfilling their injunctions. Taking this to be the fact, it was no argument whatever to skreen Mr. Hastings from punishment; for it went to say, that whatever acts of injustice a servant might

commit, provided he does it by the orders of his immediate superiors and employers, he should not be amenable to punishment; a principle which, of all others, that house should be most assiduous to resist, because such a principle if once established, would entirely overthrow the responsibility of all public officers—even of ministers themselves. But were the fact even this:—the East India Company might entertain too flattering and too sanguine ideas of their situation, and, in so doing, would naturally (as they did) give orders to their servants measured by the scale of those ideas; still was Mr. Hastings justifiable in recurring to acts of oppression and tyranny, in order to realize the visionary prospects of his masters? Was it not his duty to undeceive them, and by a proper representation of their affairs excuse himself for the nonperformance, to its full extent, of their commands? He should recapitulate, as shortly as possible, the state of the charges against Mr. Hastings, from which it would appear, how impossible it was for him, or such gentlemen as were of opinion with him, to give him any other vote but one—of concurrence with the motion; though he certainly considered the whole of the charges, as originally brought forward, as highly exaggerated in some parts, and as not wholly founded in others; yet there appeared from the evidence which had been produced that there was in them a great deal of matter of substantial criminality, and sufficiently authenticated to warrant that house in proceeding upon it.

“The chief point of this mass of delinquency, was all which he could touch upon; nor would he go into the articles at any length, having already delivered his

sentiments at large upon such of them as he was not anticipated in by gentlemen who thought as he did. In one part of the charge of Benares, there was great criminality; in that of the princesses of Oude there was still more; and *that*, indeed, he looked upon as the leading feature in the whole accusation. In the charges concerning Faruckabad and Fyzula Khan, there was also much criminal matter. In all of those there were instances of the most violent acts of injustice, tyranny, and oppression; acts which had never been attempted to be vindicated, except on the plea of necessity. What that necessity was had never been proved; but there was no necessity whatsoever which could excuse *such* actions as those, attended with *such* circumstances. He could conceive a state, compelled by the necessity of a sudden invasion, an unprovided army, and an unexpected failure of supplies, to lay violent hands on the property of its subjects; but, *then*, in doing so, it ought to do it openly, it ought to avow the necessity, it ought to avow the seizure, and it ought, unquestionably, to make provision for a proper compensation as soon as that should become practicable. But was this the principle on which Mr. Hastings went? No; he neither avowed the necessity nor the exaction; he made criminal charges, and under the colour of them he levied heavy and inordinate penalties; seizing that which, if he had a right to take it at all, he would be highly criminal in taking in such a shape, but which having no right to take, the mode of taking it rendered it much more heinous and culpable. He, certainly, had no right to impose a fine of any sort on the princesses of Oude; for there was not sufficient proof of their dissaffection or rebellion. And

the fine imposed on Cheit Sing, in a certain degree, partook of a similar guilt, though not to so great an extent; for then the crime was, in his opinion, not so much in the fine itself as the amount of it, and its disproportion to the circumstances of the person who was to pay it, and the offence which he had committed. But this vindication, from one part of the charge, in itself so weak, became, when coupled with other parts, a great aggravation; for, when a person on the one hand commits extortion, and, on the other is guilty of profusion, if he attempts to screen himself under the plea of necessity, for his rapacity, it follows that he is doubly criminal for the offence itself, and for creating the necessity of that offence by his prodigality. And a still higher aggravation arises from the manifest, and, indeed, palpable corruption attending that prodigality; to what else could be attributed the private allowances made to Hyder Beg Khan, the minister of the Nabob Vizier, and the sums paid to the vakeel of Cheit Sing, when it was remembered that the one led the way to the treaty of Chunar, and the other to the revolution in Benares?

“The honourable gentleman who spoke last, had attempted to excuse all these actions, by shewing that Mr. Hastings was not the person who first began the interference of the company with the native princes, nor the influence which it had obtained in their politics; and that the inconveniencies attending the double government of Oude were not to be imputed to him. But, surely, to whatever cause that influence might be originally attributed, Mr. Hastings was answerable for the management of it, as long as it was in his hands; and to excuse him on this plea, would be

to justify the tyranny by the power; for though the influence of the company had given him power to oppress the neighbouring country, it had not imposed on him the necessity of doing so. The honourable gentleman had attempted to palliate those parts of Mr. Hastings's conduct, by stating, that if he were guilty, he was so in common with the rest of the council; but this, if it were the case, was by no means a sufficient excuse for him, nor could it be a reason with the house for dropping the impeachment; for his having accomplices in his crimes could be no exculpation, and it would be highly derogatory to the honour of that house, if they were to say—'No; we will not bring the delinquent to justice, because there are a number of delinquents besides him.' Nor would this be a reason even for impeaching the rest; for it was by no means advisable to multiply examples: the proper way was, to select such as, from their exalted and ostensible situations, were the more likely to become an effectual example. But it was impossible to justify Mr. Hastings on such a ground as this, even if it were tenable at all; because a considerable part of those enormities with which he was charged, were committed at a distance from his council, and when he was entirely out of the reach of their advice or control.

"In the articles of the contracts, there were some glaring instances of breach of orders, and of improvidence and profusion, which, if not of so heinous a nature as those he had before mentioned, were such as called loudly for punishment. But there was another charge which he was surprized to find the gentleman who defended Mr. Hastings, could treat so lightly, as

it was one which appeared to him in itself sufficient to justify the impeachment, though it had stood alone, and was of such a nature, as, in a peculiar degree, called for the interference of that house. This was the charge of taking presents, which, in every light it could be considered in, whether as a direct breach of the law which appointed him, a positive evidence of corruption or a degradation of the character of his employers, was a great and heavy accusation: and as to the excuse which had been offered, that he had received those presents for the use of the company, even that was criminal in a degree. But for his part, he could not accede to the opinion either that he had received those sums with an intention of applying them to the service of the company, or that he had actually applied them at all in that way; for, had this been his intention, he would have kept such accounts, and made such immediate communications of them, as should clearly prove that it was so. But no such accounts were produced, no such communications were made; and there were, besides circumstances attending some of them, that proved they must have been received with a corrupt intention. As an instance of this, he should mention the present Mr. Hastings had received from Kelloram, which was attended with the most suspicious of all circumstances, namely, that this very person was at the time in treaty for a district of land, belonging to the company, and no question could be entertained, but he gave the money in order to obtain a favourable bargain; so that had this been done for the company, it was a most unjustifiable and impolitic method, of managing their concerns; for in that case, it should have been negotiated openly in the

nature of a fine, and not privately as a bribe, in which latter light alone it ought to be considered."

Upon the whole, Mr. Pitt concluded with declaring, that "the house could no otherwise consult their own honour, the duty which they owed their country, and the ends of public justice, than by sending up the impeachment to the house of lords."

The progress of the trial of Mr. Hastings* is so notorious that we leave it to announce an event in the following year, which brought Mr. Pitt more real ca-

* Mr. Hastings was born at the village of Churchhill in Oxfordshire, in the year 1732; his father was the clergyman of that parish. His grandfather, Mr. Pennystone Hastings, lived at Daylesford on the borders of Worcestershire, and sold that place, which had been possessed by the family of Mr. Hastings from 1280 to 1715; this was the last of very considerable estates which they held in Worcestershire and Gloucestershire.

Mr. Hastings was educated at Westminster school, and went out a writer to Bengal in the year 1749, when the English appeared in India in the character of mere merchants. In an early part of his life he was much noticed for his knowledge of the Persian language (at that time a very uncommon acquisition); and throughout his long administration in the East, he was a liberal encourager of learning and the polite arts.

After filling all the highest offices in Bengal, that of governor excepted, and enjoying the universal esteem of the natives of that country, he returned to England in the year 1765, with a very moderate fortune, and with an intention of spending the remainder of his life in England, in learned ease, and pacific retirement. But he had so far miscalculated the amount of his fortune, though neither a gamester nor a man of expense in any shape, that in two years he found it necessary to return to Bengal; he applied for permission, but his application was rejected by the Court of Directors—parties at that time running very high, and his friends being in a minority.

lunny as a man, and weight as a minister, than any other event in the whole period of his power. This was the alarming indisposition of the Sovereign, which rendering his Majesty incapable of attending to the

It was at this period that he formed an intimacy with the celebrated Dr. Johnson, by whose advice he proposed a scheme for establishing a professorship at the university of Oxford, for the study of the Persian language. Fortunately for his native country, this scheme was rendered abortive by the following circumstance:—A parliamentary enquiry was established to examine the state of the Company's affairs, in 1767, in consequence of the acquisition of Bengal by Lord Clive. Mr. Hastings in this enquiry, underwent an examination for several hours, at the bar of the House of Commons; an incident well recollected by every gentleman who was at that period of the third legislative estate. The evidence which he gave was in all its parts so clear, comprehensive, and satisfactory, and displayed a knowledge so perfect of the affairs of India, that it immediately brought him into general notice. I introduce this circumstance merely to shew how forcibly politics can warp the most moderate men. After the examination Lord John Cavendish and Mr. Frederick Montague, who paid close attention to his evidence, and whom he did not then know, desired him to dine with them at a neighbouring coffee-house; an event which Mr. Hastings, as I have been informed, has pointedly mentioned, when Mr. Frederick Montague was mentioned as one of the managers, and the whole house of Cavendish were his combined persecutors.

In the next year, 1768, Mr. Hastings was appointed second in council at Madras, and in 1771, he was removed to Bengal, and ordered to succeed to the government in the next year—he was officially invested in that high office in 1772, and remained at the head of the government, under various parliamentary appointments for thirteen years.

To this account of Mr. Hastings from the author of his Defence, the following excellent verses are added as the best evidence of his feelings and acquisitions,

business of government, involved a question of regency, and with it a variety of difficulties, which came

IMITATED FROM HORACE, BOOK 2. ODE 16.

BY MR. HASTINGS.

Written on his Passage from Bengal.

“ For ease the harass’d seaman prays,
When equinoctial tempests raise
 The Cape’s surrounding wave ;
When hanging o’er the reef he hears
The cracking mast, and sees, or fears
 Beneath, his wat’ry grave.

For ease the slow Mahratta spoils,
And hardier Sic erratic toils,
 While both their ease forego :
For ease which neither gold can buy
Nor robes nor gems, which oft belie
 The cover’d heart, bestow.

For neither wealth nor titles join’d
Can heal the soul or suff’ring mind—
 Lo ! where their owner lies ;
Perch’d on his couch distemper breathes,
And care like smoke in turbid wreaths,
 Round the gay ceiling flies.

He who enjoys, nor covets more
The lands his father held before*
 Is of true bliss possess’d ;
Let but his mind unfettered tread
Far as the paths of knowledge lead,
 And wise as well as blest.

* Since this poem was written Mr. Hastings has purchased his family estate at Daylesford in Worcestershire.

came intimately home to the bosoms of the British people.

From a state of comparative quiet which parliament would seem to have enjoyed, it now returned to all

No fears his peace of mind annoy,
Lest printed lies his fame destroy,
Which labored years have won,
Nor pack'd committees break his rest ;
Nor av'rice sends him forth in quest
Of climes beneath the sun.

Short is our span, then why engage
In schemes for which man's transient age
Was ne'er by fate design'd ;
Why slight the gifts of nature's hand,
What wand'rer from his native land
E'er left himself behind ?

The restless thought and wayward will
And discontent attend him still,
Nor quit him while he lives :
At sea care follows in the wind,
At land it mounts the pad behind,
Or with the post-boy drives.

He who would happy live to day,
Must laugh the present ills away,
Nor think of woes to come ;
For come they will, or soon or late
Since mixed at best is man's estate
By heaven's eternal doom,

To ripen'd age Clive liv'd renown'd,
With lacs enrich'd, with honour crown'd,
His valour's well earn'd meed.
Too long, alas ! he liv'd to hate
His envied lot, and died too late,
From life's oppression freed.

the conflicts of party in the most agonizing of all discussions.

Mr. Pitt having (Dec. 10, 1788) brought up the report of the physicians touching the state of his Majesty's health, which was ordered to lie on the table, proceeded to observe—"That the paper from the privy council, which had been already placed upon the table, as well as the more regular examinations of which the house had just heard the contents, afforded them sufficient information, both with regard to the melancholy subject which had occasioned them to

An early death was Elliot's doom,
I saw his opening virtues bloom
And manly sense unfold;
Too soon to fade! I bade the stone
Record his name midst hordes unknown
Unknowing what is told.*

To thee perhaps the fates may give,
I wish they may in health to live,
Herds, flocks, and fruitful fields;
Thy vacant hours in mirth to shine
With these the muse, already thine,
Her present bounties yields.

For me, O Shore, I only claim
To merit not to seek for fame,
The good and just to please.
A state above the fear of want;
Domestic love, Heav'n's choicest grant!
Health, leisure, peace, and ease.

* Such however is the love of virtue, which owns no particular language or character, that around this mausoleum, (which has a real as well as poetical existence) the natives have raised a town distinguished by the name of *Elliot*.

assemble, and the opinions of the physicians; and must at the same time, naturally fill their minds with a reasonable hope, that a happier moment would arrive than the present, although the faculty, who had been consulted, were still unable to declare the precise point of time of its arrival. Gratified, however, as the house might be in that expectation, yet the uncertainty by which its completion might be protracted, rendered it their indispensable duty to proceed, notwithstanding their regret for the occasion, with every degree of dispatch, and in the most respectful manner, to take those intermediate steps which the unfortunate exigency of the moment required, in order to provide for the present serious situation of affairs, with a view to guard the liberties of the people from danger, and secure the safety of the country; that his Majesty might have the gratification of knowing when the happy moment of his recovery should arrive, that the people whom he had loved and protected, had suffered as little as possible by his illness. The point to be agitated on this occasion, involved in it whatever was valuable to the people, whatever was important in the fundamental principles of our free constitution. The steps to be taken as preliminaries, therefore, to the discussion of this truly interesting subject, were such as he could not conceive likely to create any difference of opinion. That the house might have the advantage of the wisdom of their ancestors to guide their proceedings, and to act upon the fullest information, he should move for the appointment of a committee to examine into, search for, and report precedents, from which report they would be enabled to see, what had been the steps taken in former moments of

difficulty and danger, whence they might proceed with the greater security in providing for the present melancholy circumstances of the country."

In conclusion, after debating at some extent upon the necessity of this mode, Mr. Pitt said, "he would not detain the house by enlarging upon the subject any longer, but as, on the one hand, it would serve to throw all the light upon it that precedent and history could afford; so, on the other, as he conceived the report of such a committee as he had mentioned might be made in the course of the present week, it would very little contribute to retard the dispatch which was so desirable, and must be of no material inconvenience. With a view therefore to give their proceedings every necessary solemnity, and regulate them by every possible degree of caution, he should move—

"That a committee be appointed to examine, and report precedents of such proceedings as may have been had, in case of the personal exercise of the royal authority being prevented or interrupted, by infirmity, or otherwise, with a view to provide for the same."

The first to rise on that subject was Mr. Fox. That gentleman had with uncommon haste returned from a continental tour, to which the tranquillity of parliament had left him leisure, to assume the care of certain rights supposed to belong to the Prince of Wales on such an occasion.

His opposition began on the delay arising from Mr. Pitt's motion, and, with his usual ingenuousness, he did not hesitate to declare, "that *his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales had as clear, as express a right to assume the reins of government, and exercise the powers of sovereignty during the continuance of the illness and inca-*

capacity with which it had pleased God to afflict his Majesty, as in the case of his Majesty having undergone a perfect and natural demise."

On this Mr. Pitt observed, "that the right honourable gentleman had thrown out an idea which, whatever he might have generally thought of him, as to his penetration and discernment, as to his acquaintance with the laws and general history of the country, and as to his knowledge of the theory of the constitution, (however he might have found occasion to differ with him in respect to his measures and opinions in his practice in it) he defied all his ingenuity to support, upon any analogy of constitutional precedent, or to reconcile to the spirit and genius of the constitution itself. The doctrine advanced by the right honourable gentleman was itself, if any additional reason were necessary, the strongest and most unanswerable for appointing the committee he had moved for, that could possibly be given. If a claim of right was intimated, even though not formally, on the part of the Prince of Wales, to assume the government, it became of the utmost consequence to ascertain, from precedent or history, whether this claim were founded; which, if it were, precluded the house from the possibility of all deliberation on the subject. In the mean time, he maintained, that it would appear, from every precedent, and from every page of our history, that to assert such a right in the Prince of Wales, or any one else, independant of the decision of both houses of parliament, was little less than treason to the constitution of the country. He said, he did not mean then to enter into the discussion of that great and important point; because a fit occasion for discussing it, would

soon afford both the right honourable gentleman and himself an ample opportunity for stating their sentiments upon it. In the mean time, he pledged himself to this assertion—that in the case of the interruption of the personal exercise of the royal authority, without any previous lawful provision having been made for carrying on the government, it belonged to the other branches of the legislature, on the part of the nation at large, the body they represented, to provide, according to their discretion, for the temporary exercise of the royal authority, in the name, and on the behalf, of the sovereign, in such a manner as they should think requisite; and that, unless by their decision, the Prince of Wales had no right (speaking of strict right) to assume the government, more than any other individual subject of the country. What parliament ought to determine on that subject, was a question of discretion. However strong the argument might be on that ground, in favour of the Prince of Wales, which he would not enter into at present, it did not affect the question of right: because neither the whole nor any part of the royal authority could belong to him in the present circumstances, unless conferred by both houses of parliament.

“As to the right honorable gentleman’s enforcement of the Prince of Wales’s claim, he admitted that it was a claim entitled to most serious consideration; and thence, must take the liberty of arguing, that it was the more necessary to learn how the house had acted in cases of similar exigency, and what had been the opinion of parliament on such occasions. He would not allow that no precedent analogous to an interruption of the personal exercise of the royal authority

could be found, although there might possibly not exist a precedent of an heir apparent in a state of majority, during such an occurrence, and in that case, he contended, that it devolved on the remaining branches of the legislature, on the part of the people of England, to exercise their discretion in providing a substitute."

Mr. Pitt contended, "that in the mode in which the right honourable gentleman had treated the subject, a new question presented itself, and that of greater magnitude even than the question which was originally before them, as matter of necessary deliberation. The question now was, the question of their own rights, and it was become a doubt, according to the right honourable gentleman's opinion, whether that house had, on this important occasion, a deliberative power. He wished, for the present, to wave the discussion of that momentous consideration; but, he declared that he would, at a fit opportunity, state his reasons for advising what step parliament ought to take in the present critical situation of the country, contenting himself with giving his contradiction to the right honourable gentleman's bold assertion, and pledging himself to maintain the opposite ground against a doctrine so irreconcilable to the spirit and genius of the constitution. If the report of the committee had not proved the necessity of the motion he had made, the right honourable gentleman had furnished the house with so strong an argument for enquiry, that, if any doubt had existed, that doubt must vanish. Let it not, then, be imputed to him, that he offered the motion with a view to create delay; indeed, the right honourable gentleman had not made any such imputa-

tion. In fact, no imputation of that sort could be supported, since no longer time had been spent, after the first day of their meeting, than was absolutely necessary to insure as full an attendance as the solemnity and seriousness of the occasion required: since that time every day had been spent in ascertaining the state of his Majesty's health, and now the necessity of the case was proved, it behoved them to meet it on the surest grounds. Let them proceed, then, to learn and ascertain their own rights; let every man in that house, and every man in the nation, who might hear any report of what had passed in the house on that day, consider, that on their future proceeding depended their own interests, and the interest and honor of a sovereign, deservedly the idol of his people. Let the house not, therefore, rashly annihilate and annul the authority of parliament, in which the existence of the constitution was so intimately involved."

As Mr. Fox had attacked the first propositions of Mr. Pitt, so Mr. Burke seized the arguments which the minister had used in their defence with the sarcastic humour of which he was so capable. He called Mr. Pitt, from his language, the competitor of the Prince, and on this ground proceeded to draw a parallel between the amiable character of his royal highness, and a *prince* who had threatened the assertors of the prince of Wales's right with the penalties of constructive treason.

Mr. Pitt concluded the conversation with remarking, "that if the right honorable gentleman (Mr. Burke) who had condescended to be the advocate and the specimen of moderation, had found any warmth in his manner of speaking before, which led him to think that

he had not considered what he said, he was ready to repeat it with all possible coolness, and knew not one word that he would retract. Upon this ground, therefore, he was still ready to maintain, that it was little less than treason to the constitution to assert, that the Prince of Wales had a claim to the exercise of the sovereign power during the interruption of the personal authority of his Majesty by infirmity, and in his life-time; and to this asseveration should he adhere, because he considered such a claim as superseding the deliberative power and discretion of the two existing branches of the legislature. And, when he said the Prince of Wales had no more right to urge such a claim than any other individual subject, he appealed to the house upon the decency with which the right honorable gentleman had charged him with placing himself as the competitor of his royal highness. At that period of our history, when the constitution was settled on that foundation on which it now existed, when Mr. Somers and other great men declared, that no person had a right to the crown independent of the consent of the two houses, would it have been thought either fair or decent for any member of either house to have pronounced Mr. Somers a personal competitor of William the Third?"

A committee was then formed to search for precedents,* which two days after produced its report, and Mr. Pitt moved that the house should resolve itself into a committee on the state of the nation.

* This committee was of course composed of gentlemen taken from both sides of the house.

Mr. Fox attacked this motion, and Mr. Pitt arose to answer him. We shall proceed with the regular advancement of this most important question to an issue between the two great parties which divided the opinions of the realm.

Mr. Pitt begged leave to remind the house, "that they had just received a voluminous report from the committee appointed to search for precedents, in order that gentlemen might have every information before them, to guide their proceedings under the present arduous and singular situation of the country, that the wisdom of their ancestors, the statutes of the realm, and the records of parliament could afford; and he had moved to refer that report, together with the examination of his Majesty's physicians, to the committee of the whole house, who were to take the state of the nation into their consideration upon the ensuing Tuesday. In that committee, the topics touched on by the right honorable gentleman (Mr. Fox) would necessarily undergo an ample discussion. In their last debate on the subject, there appeared to be a point at issue between the right honorable gentleman and himself; and from all the right honorable gentleman had then said, it still appeared to be no less at issue than before the right honorable gentleman explained, as he thought proper, the meaning of a very essential part of his speech on the preceding Wednesday." Mr. Pitt said, "that he should be sorry to fix on any gentleman a meaning, which he afterwards declared not to have been his meaning. In whatever way, therefore, he had before understood the right honorable gentleman's words relative to the Prince's forbearing to assert his claim, he was willing to take the matter from the right

honorable gentleman's present explanation, and to meet it upon those grounds where he had then, after maturer deliberation, thought fit to place it. The right honorable gentleman now asserted, that the Prince of Wales had a right to exercise the royal authority, under the present circumstances of the country; but it was a right not in possession, until the prince could exercise it on, what the right honorable gentleman called, the adjudication of parliament. He, on his part, denied that the Prince of Wales had any right whatever, and upon that point the right honorable gentleman and he were still at issue—an issue, that, in his opinion, must be decided, before they proceeded one step farther in the great and important considerations to be discussed and determined.

“Concerning one part of the right honorable gentleman's speech, it was impossible for him to remain silent, as the right honorable gentleman's ideas in that point had not appeared to him to be quite accurate and distinct. He seemed to have intended to have renounced all idea of the Prince of Wales's right to assume the exercise of the royal authority, under the present or similar circumstances, without the previous adjudication of parliament, or of the two houses; but, if he understood the right honorable gentleman correctly, he had used the words, “during the sitting of parliament;” the plain inference from which expression was, that if parliament were not sitting, the Prince of Wales could assume the exercise of the regal authority.” Mr. Pitt declared, “that he thought the Prince of Wales could, in no case, have power to assume the right. If there were no parliament in existence, he granted that the heir apparent, acting in concert with other persons

in great situations, might, under such circumstances as the present, have issued writs and convened the two houses, for the purpose of providing for the exigency. Such a proceeding would be justified by the necessity of the case, and with a view to the safety of the nation, which superseded all forms; but that it would be a legal and formal summons of the parliament, or that a parliament could be called together without legal authority, he must absolutely deny. Such a meeting would be a convention, like to that assembled at the time of the abdication of James the Second, and in other periods of difficulty; but it could not be a legal and a formal calling together of a parliament. With regard to the question of the Prince of Wales's right of assuming the power during the intermission of parliament, and his right not in possession, as it was called, during the sitting of parliament, he need not rest much the distraction, denying, as he did, that any right to assume the regal authority, under any circumstances, independent of the consent and approbation of parliament, existed in the Prince of Wales. But, supposing the right of assumption of royalty given up altogether, and that the prince must have the right adjudged by parliament, he denied that they were canvassing a right, and acting as judges, as the sentiments of the right honorable gentleman so manifestly intimated. It was subversive of the principles of the constitution to admit, that the Prince of Wales might seat himself on the throne during the life-time of his father; and the intimation of the existence of such a right, as he had remarked on a former occasion, presented a question of greater magnitude and importance even than the present exigency, and the provision that it necessarily

required ; a question that involved in it the principles of the constitution, the protection and security of our liberties, and the safety of the state.

“ Whatever, therefore, might be the order of their proceeding, he hoped there would be an unanimous concurrence of opinion, that it was impossible to let the question of right, which had been started, undergo admission, without its being fully discussed and decided. It was a question that shook the foundation of the constitution, and upon the decision of which, all that was dear to us as Britons, depended. In his opinion, therefore, it was their first duty to decide, whether there were any right in the Prince of Wales to claim the regal power, under any circumstances of the country, independent of the actual demise of the crown. In the discussion of the powers with which the regent was to be invested, there might be differences of opinion, whether the whole of the royal prerogatives should be delegated on the grounds of expediency; there might be differences of opinion, whether a portion only of the royal authority should be delegated, and a part reserved, on the grounds of prudence and discretion. These were important topics, which they could not discuss, unless they first knew, whether they were sitting as judges, or as house of parliament, possessing a power of deliberation, and capable of exercising a constitutional discretion. They must first ascertain, whether that which should be invested in the Prince of Wales, was matter of adjudication on their part, of right in his royal highness, or as a trust in behalf and in the name of his Majesty ; and therefore he should think it his duty to bring forward the question of right as a preliminary question. If that question should be

decided in the affirmative, there would be no need of specific measures. Should it, however, be determined upon a contrary ground, the way would become cleared, and the house would know how to proceed. He had, indeed, mentioned the alternative, but, Heaven forbid, that the fatal alternative should be decided in favor of the intimated right of the Prince of Wales !”

Mr. Pitt next took notice of the call Mr. Fox had made upon him, relative to the future propositions to be brought forward by him in the committee which had been moved for, to take into consideration the state of the nation. He said, “ that if the question of right should be decided, as he thought it would, upon constitutional principles, he should, in that case, certainly proceed to propose measures for providing for the interruption of the royal authority, occasioned by his Majesty’s present incapacity to exercise it ; and as he was always happy when he could concur with the requisition of the right honorable gentleman, he would state the outline, without feeling any prejudice to the person who had called for it ; but, he begged to have it understood, that what he was about to state, was not to be a matter of debate at that moment, nor were any arguments then to be raised upon it. He proceeded to declare, that, however decided he might be in his opinion against the whole, or any part, of the regal power being vested in the Prince of Wales, as a matter of right, in any way in which that right had been explained, he was equally ready to say, that, as a matter of discretion, and on the ground of expediency, it was, in his opinion, highly desirable, that whatever part of the regal power it was necessary should be exercised at all, during this unhappy interval, should be vested

in a single person, and that this person should be the Prince of Wales: that he also thought it most consistent with true constitutional principles, and most for the public convenience, that his royal highness should exercise that portion of authority, whatever it might be, unfettered by any permanent council, and with the free choice of his political servants. With regard to the portion of royal authority which ought to be given, or that which ought to be withholden, it would be premature, in this stage, to enter into the particular discussion of it: he had no objection, however, even now, to declare in general, that whatever authority was necessary for carrying on the public business with vigour and dispatch, and for providing during this interval, for the safety and interests of the country, ought to be given; but, on the other hand, any authority, not necessary for these purposes, and capable of being, by possibility, employed in any which might tend to embarrass the exercise of the king's lawful authority, when he should be enabled to resume it into his own hands, ought to be withholden; because, from its being given, more inconvenience might arise to the future interests both of the people and of the crown, than any which could arise, in the mean time, from its temporary suspension."

Mr. Pitt added, "that he could justify the principles of this explicit declaration of his intention, on the ground, that, whatever was given to the regent, or withholden, ought to be given, or withholden, with a view to the moment when his Majesty should be capable of resuming his rightful prerogatives; a circumstance to which it peculiarly became him to look, in the situation in which he stood, honored with the

confidence of a sovereign to whom he was bound, and strongly attached, by the ties of gratitude and duty;—but of that he would say no more. Whatever judgment might be formed of what he declared, he was conscious of having given a free and an honest opinion, and was satisfied with that consciousness. He conceived it could not be thought necessary for him to go any farther into the subject, as the adjustment of the whole proceeding must rest with the committee on the state of the nation, where it would be necessary to come forward with the different propositions separately, and to proceed, step by step, to mark and define, by distinct resolutions, what parts of the royal prerogative, should be given to the regent, and what withholden.”

Mr. Pitt's notice having been agreed to, the committee sat on the 16th, and Mr. Pitt thus ably opened the subject, and came to an issue with his powerful opponents. He began by stating that “the house were then in a committee to take into consideration the state of the nation, under circumstances the most calamitous which had befallen the country at any period, and remarked, that it was then a century ago, since any point of equal importance had engaged the attention of that house. The circumstance that had then occurred was the revolution; between which, however, and the present circumstance, there was a great and essential difference. At that time, the two houses had to provide for the filling up of a throne, that was vacant by the abdication of James the Second; at present, they had to provide for the exercise of the royal authority, when his Majesty's political capacity was whole, and entire, and the throne consequently

full, although, in fact, all the various functions of the executive government were suspended, but which suspension they had every reason to expect would be but temporary. There could, he said, be but one sentiment upon that head, which was, that the most sanguine of his Majesty's physicians could not effect a cure more speedily than it was the anxious wish of every man in that house, and every description of his Majesty's subjects, that his cure might be effected, and that he might thence be enabled again to resume the exercise of his own authority. During the temporary continuance, however, of his Majesty's malady, it was their indispensable duty to provide for the deficiency in the legislature, in order that a due regard might be had to the safety of the crown, and to the interests of the people. The first report before the committee established the melancholy fact that had rendered their declarations necessary; the second contained a collection of such precedents, selected from the history of former times, as were in any degree analogous to the present unfortunate situation of the country; and, although he would not undertake to say that still more precedents might not have been found, yet, such as the report contained would serve to throw a considerable degree of light on the subject, and point out to the house the mode of proceeding most proper to be adopted.

“ Notwithstanding the magnitude of the question, what provision ought to be made for supplying the deficiency? there was a question of a greater and still more important nature, which must be discussed and decided first, as a preliminary to their future transactions, with a view to the present exigency. The ques-

tion to which he alluded, was, whether any person had a right, either to assume or to claim the exercise of the royal authority, during the incapacity and infirmity of the sovereign; or, whether it was the right of the lords and commons of England to provide for the deficiency in the legislature, resulting from such incapacity? On a former day he had stated, that, in consequence of an assertion having been made in that house, that a right attached to his royal highness the Prince of Wales, as heir apparent, to exercise sovereign authority, as soon as the two houses of parliament declared his Majesty, from illness and indisposition, incapable of exercising his royal functions, it appeared to him to be absolutely and indispensably necessary, that the question of right should be first decided by the committee, before they took a single step to provide for the deficiency of the third estate of the realm. By the assertion of the existence of such a right, no matter whether a right that could be assumed in the first instance, or a right which attached, after the declaration of both houses of parliament, that his Majesty was incapable, a doubt had been thrown upon the existence of what he had ever considered to be the most sacred and important rights of the two houses; and it became absolutely necessary for them to decide that doubt, and, by such decision, ascertain whether they had a power to deliberate, or whether they had only to adjudge, that such a right as had been mentioned was legally vested in his royal highness the Prince of Wales. The most embarrassing difficulties had, indeed, been thrown upon their proceedings, by the assertion, that such a claim existed; and although he was free to confess, that the assertion

had not been made from any authority, and that they had since heard, though not in that house, that it was not intended that the claim should be made, yet, having been once stated, by a very respectable member of that house, as his opinion, it was an opinion of too much importance to be passed by unnoticed. He would entreat the house to remember, however, that he had not stirred the question of right originally. If, therefore, any serious danger were actually to be dreaded, by its being discussed and decided, that danger and its consequences were solely imputable to the first agitation of the question, and not to him. Had the doubt never been raised, an express declaration on the subject had not been necessary; but, as the matter stood, such a declaration must be made one way or the other. He begged, however, that it might not be imputed to him, that he was desirous of wasting time in bringing forward any abstract, or speculative, or theoretical question. An abstract question, in his conception of it, was a question wholly unnecessary, the discussion of which could answer no end, nor could its decision afford any light to guide and assist them in their proceedings. Of a very different nature is the question of right; it was a question which stood in the way of all subsequent proceeding, the resolving of which must necessarily decide the whole of their conduct with regard to the present important business; they were not free to deliberate and determine, while the doubt of an existing right or claim hung over their heads; they could not speak intelligibly, or to any purpose, until they knew their proper characters, and whether they were exercising their own rights for the safety of the crown and the interests of the people, or

whether they were usurping that which had never belonged to them. On that ground it was that he had declared the question of right not to be an abstract question, a speculative question, or a theoretical question.

“The first information which the papers that had been referred to the committee afforded, was that which he should make the first resolution. It was a resolution of fact, as the ground of those that were designed by him to follow it; a resolution, that of which the language of all his Majesty’s physicians afforded sufficient proof—that his Majesty was incapable, from illness, of coming to his parliament, or attending to any public business, whence arose the interruption of the exercise of the royal authority. To that resolution of fact, he conceived there could not be any objection. His next resolution would be the resolution of right, couched in part in the words in the bill of rights, and stating, “that it was the right and duty of the lords spiritual and temporal, and of the house of commons, as the rightful representatives of all the estates of the people of England, to provide for the deficiency in the legislature, by the interruption of the exercise of the royal authority, in consequence of his Majesty’s incapacity through indisposition.”

Here Mr. Pitt renewed his arguments in support of the claim of the two houses of parliament, declaring that, “under the present circumstances of the country, it was his firm and unalterable opinion, that it was the absolute and undeniable right of the two houses, on the part of the people, to provide for the revival of the third estate. He declared, he would state the point at issue between him and the right honorable gentle-

man (Mr. Fox) opposite to him fairly. He wished not to take any advantage of any shades of difference between them, but to argue upon the solid and substantial difference of their opinions. If he had conceived the right honorable gentleman properly, he had asserted, that, in his opinion, the Prince of Wales, as heir apparent, upon the incapacity of the sovereign to exercise the sovereign authority being declared, had as clear, as perfect, and as indisputable a right, to take upon himself the full exercise of all the authorities and prerogatives of his father, as if his Majesty had undergone an actual demise. If it could be proved to exist by any precedents drawn from history, or founded in law, or by the analogy of the constitution, he wished to have been told what these precedents were, because, in that case, the ground would be harrowed, and the proceedings of the committee rendered short and simple, as they would have no power nor occasion to deliberate; the only step they could take would be to recognize the claim of right. That claim of right, however, he flatly denied to have any existence capable of being sustained by such proof as he had mentioned. The right of providing for the deficiency of the royal authority, he contended, rested with the two remaining branches of the legislature. He professed himself exceedingly happy to hear that a declaration had been made in another place, from high authority, that the right stated by the right honorable gentleman in that house to have existence, was not meant to be urged by a great personage. He came that day, confirmed in every opinion which he had before stated; and particularly confirmed in the opinion that no such right or claim in the Prince of

Wales, as heir apparent, to exercise the royal authority during the incapacity of the sovereign, could be proved, either from precedents drawn from history, or from the law, or from the spirit of the constitution.

“ He begged leave to remind the committee, that when the right honorable gentleman first mentioned the right of the Prince of Wales in this particular, the right honorable gentleman had declared he was willing to wave the motion for a committee to search for precedents, because that he was persuaded, and the house must allow, that no precedent could be found that bore upon the particular case, of a Prince of Wales, the heir apparent to the crown, being of full age, and capable of taking on himself the exercise of the royal authority, under such circumstances as the present. There certainly was no case precisely in point; but, though the committee above stairs could not find a case precisely in point, they had furnished the house with many precedents, from which analogies might be drawn. He called upon the right honorable gentleman opposite to him, to point out a single case analogous to the infancy, infirmity, or illness of a sovereign, in which the full powers of sovereignty were exercised by any one person whatever. If the right attached to his royal highness, under the present circumstances, in the same manner as on the demise of his father, an heir presumptive would succeed as perfectly as an heir apparent, and, in pursuance of that doctrine, those precedents that would attach in the one case would attach in the other. For precedents that were analogous, he would refer the committee to the report on the table; the precedents in which, though they might not throw all the light on the subject that could be wished, cer-

tainly tended to elucidate it considerably. He would refer to some of the precedents, and convince gentlemen that their result formed the most undeniable proof that no such right existed as had been pretended.

“The first precedent was taken from the reign of Edward the Third, when no heir apparent had claimed the exercise of the royal authority. The parliament of those days, whether wisely or not was no question before the committee, provided a council about the king’s person to act for him; a clear proof, that they conceived the power existed with them to provide for the exercise of the royal authority. The next precedent was in the reign of Richard the Second, when counsellors were also appointed to exercise the regal power. The third precedent occurred in the infancy of Henry the Sixth. At that time the parliament were called together by the young king’s second uncle, the first being still living, but out of the kingdom; and that act was ratified by parliament, they not considering it sufficient that it was done by the authority of the duke. In that instance, again, it was clear, that the regency was carried on by the parliament. These three instances were the principal of those stated in the report of the committee; subsequent precedents would prove, that no one instance could be found of any person’s having exercised the royal authority during the infancy of a king, but by the grant of the two houses of parliament, excepting only where a previous provision had been made. Having thus far mentioned the power of parliament during the infancy of a king, he observed, that he would next state their power during the king’s absence; and if, in that case, it should be asserted, that the heir apparent had a right

to exercise the royal authority, let the committee consider how the assertion would stand.

“It had been advanced, that “in the majority of such cases the power had been given to the Prince of Wales.” If such cases could be adduced, they would, he owned, be cases in point; but, then, to prove what? To prove, that such heirs apparent possessed no inherent right. If a right existed to represent the king, it must be a perfect and an entire right, a right admitting of no modification whatever, because if any thing short of the whole power were given, it would be less than by right could be claimed, and consequently an acknowledgment that no such right existed. But, could any such cases be pointed out? By a reference to the ancient records, it would be found, that the *custos regni*, or *lieutenant for the king*, had never been invested with the whole rights of the king himself. The powers given to the *custos regni* had been different, under different circumstances; a plain and manifest inference thence arose, that the *custodes regni* did not hold their situation as a right, but by appointment. The powers of bestowing benefices, and doing other acts of sovereignty, had been occasionally given to the *custodes regni*, which shewed that their powers had been always subject to some limitation or other. In modern times, lord-justices had been frequently appointed to the exercise of sovereign authority, during the residence of a prince of age in the country. Another instance that occurred to him was, where the exercise of royalty had been interrupted by severe illness, and which appeared to him to be more a case in point than any other, to the present melancholy moment. The example to which he alluded was the

precedent of Henry the Sixth, where the heir apparent was not of full age. It would then, to supply the defect of that precedent, be necessary to have recourse to the principles of the constitution, and to the laws of the land; and, upon this ground, it would be discovered, that the parliament of that day provided for the moment; that they were not content with such provision, but that they looked forward to the time when the heir apparent should attain full age, granting him a reversionary patent, the same precisely with the regent's, to take place when he should come of age. Thus, though they provided for allowing him at that period more considerable powers than they had suffered him before to possess, they had still not granted him the full powers of sovereignty, but had made such limitations as proved their most positive denial of any right existing. That instance, though a single one, and where the heir apparent was not of full age, was sufficient to shew the sense of parliament in those days, as much as if the heir apparent had been of full age.

“ If no precedent contrary to those which he had stated to the committee could be advanced, he should presume, that the committee would, of course, admit that no right existed with an heir apparent, or an heir presumptive, to assume the functions of royalty on the temporary incapacity of the sovereign; nor any rights but those delegated by the two remaining branches of the legislature. He scrupled not, therefore, to declare, that no positive law, nor the least analogy from any law, could be adduced to support the doctrine of right. A record had, indeed, been quoted elsewhere, (the House of Lords,) to prove that the king and the

heir apparent were one and the same person, and that it followed of course, that, on the incapacity of the king, the heir apparent had a legal and clear right immediately to exercise the same powers that the king had possessed : but a different opinion was entertained of that record by persons of eminence and authority in the law, and by their opinion a far different conclusion was drawn from the same record, the metaphorical expression of which was not to be taken literally. Another opinion which had been started, was, that if parliament had not been sitting, in such a case the Prince would have a right to assume the royal authority, and summon parliament. But this position he should expressly contradict, because those who were, like him, standing up for the rights of parliament, and, through parliament, for the rights of the people, were peculiarly fortunate in one particular; they were as fortunate as most of those who had truth and justice on their side generally were, because little was left for them to do, except to controvert and overcome their antagonists by stating to them and comparing their own arguments and assertions, made at different times, and as the occasion suited.

“ It had been pretty strenuously contended elsewhere by a learned magistrate, (Lord Loughborough,) who had chosen to force his own construction on their silence, that our ancestors, if they had entertained any doubt of the right of an heir apparent, would in their wisdom have provided for so possible a case as the present, instead of leaving the interpretation of this point to that learned lord's wisdom, it must be concluded by the committee that they would have provided for it in plain, distinct, clear, and express words,

and would not have left it liable to be differently understood. The wisdom of our ancestors, however, he conceived, was better proved by their having said nothing upon it, but left such a question to be decided where it ought to be decided, whenever the occasion required it, by the two houses of parliament. That the committee might assert the same, he meant, in the resolution he should offer, to quote that doctrine from the bill of rights, and assert that it rested with the lords and commons, as the rightful representatives of the people. If the contrary doctrine was so evident that it must be true; if the heir apparent, or heir presumptive, had a clear right to assume the royal prerogative, on the interruption of those powers, he desired to ask every gentleman in the committee, whether they would wish to adopt such a doctrine as a doctrine applicable to the safety of the crown, which had been long gloriously worn by his Majesty, and which it was the ardent, the sincere wish of his people that he might long continue to wear, until it should, in due time, and in a natural manner, descend to his legal and his illustrious successor?" Mr. Pitt here strongly deprecated the idea of avoiding the discussion of what limitations might be necessary for insuring the safety of the crown on the head of its present possessor, on account of the many virtuous qualifications of the prince, or out of respect to any other motive whatsoever. "It would not have been wisdom in our ancestors if they had said, that the care of the person of the sovereign ought to be vested in the heir apparent. He hoped in this declaration, that he should not be misunderstood, for he was ready to acknowledge the greatest and best qualities in the present heir appa-

rent; but he would rather, in what he had said, be misrepresented in any manner and any where, than sacrifice the duty which he owed to the safety of his sovereign, and to the interests of the people.

“The right honorable gentleman opposite to him had said, on a former day, that his royal highness had as clear a right to the exercise of the sovereign authority, as he would have had in case of the natural demise of the sovereign, and that he conceived the present to be a *civil death*. Could the committee so consider his Majesty’s indisposition, which was not an uncommon case, and generally but temporary, could they conceive that his Majesty had undergone a *civil death*? He was sure they would not. If such a thing existed at the present moment as a *civil death*, his royal highness would immediately ascend the throne, with the full exercise of the royal prerogative, and not as a regent; for a *civil death*, like a natural death, was permanent. He stated from Mr. Justice Blackstone, that there were but two cases in which a man could undergo a civil death; the first was his being banished from the realm by process of common law; the second, his having entered into a religious order, and becoming a monk professed, thereby taking himself for ever from all secular concerns. The first was an act which cut off a criminal from society within the realm, and the other was the voluntary act of retiring from the world. Would any man pretend, that either of those cases was analogous to the visitation of Heaven, to a stroke inflicted by Providence, which might, and probably would, prove temporary? Could it be pretended, that they ought to be adduced as acts to prevent his

Majesty in future from exercising those powers which he had never forfeited, never renounced?

“After having advanced so much in contradiction to the claim of right, he believed no one would think of asserting it. The only question, then, was, and to which what had passed before was but preliminary, where did the right exist? If no provision, in precedent, in history, or in law, was to be found for the exercise of such authority, on the disability of the sovereign, where was it to be found? It was to be found in the voice, in the sense of the people. With them it rested; and, though, in extraordinary cases, in most countries, such an event as the calamity which all deplored, would have gone near to dissolve the constitution itself, yet, in this more happily tempered form of government, equally participating the advantages, and at the same time avoiding the evils of a democracy, an oligarchy, or an aristocracy, it would have no such effect; for though the third estate of the legislature might be deficient, yet the organs of speech of the people remained entire in their representatives, by the houses of lords and commons, through which the sense of the people might be taken. The lords and commons represented the whole estate of the people, and with them it rested as a right, a constitutional and legal right, to provide for the deficiency of the third branch of the legislature, whenever a deficiency arose; they were the legal organs of speech for the people; and such he conceived to be the true doctrine of the constitution. He would not merely state these as his own opinions, but he would state them to be the opinions of those who had framed the revolu-

tion, who had not, like the committee, to provide for the interruption of regal powers, while the throne was full, but to supply the deficiency of the third branch of the legislature, which was wholly vacant. Whenever the third branch, however, of the legislature was wholly gone, or but suffered a suspension, it was equally necessary to resort to the organs of the people's speech. Agreeably to the laws of the land, to the records of parliament, to precedent, and to the constitution, the political capacity of the king, except in cases of absolute forfeiture of the crown, was always considered as legally entire; and during that political capacity, according to the spirit of the constitution, if any natural incapacity should cause a suspension of the royal authority, it then rested with the remaining branches of the legislature to supply such defect. In every proceeding of the parliament, in the reign of Henry the Sixth, they had acted upon such a power, and declared in what manner, and by whom, the royal authority was to be exercised for, and in the name of, the King. In that reign the Duke of Gloucester claimed the regency, and applied to parliament for the same as his right; but the answer of parliament to such claim was, that he neither had by birth, nor the will of his brother, any right whatever to the exercise of the royal authority. They, however, appointed him regent, and entrusted him with the care of the young king. Here was an instance of the claim of right having been actually made, and an instance, likewise, that it had been fully decided on by the then parliament, who declared, that no such right existed, either from the law of the land, or from precedent. The rights of parliament were congenial with the constitution."

Mr. Pitt referred the committee to every analogy that could be drawn from the principles of the constitution, and he contended, that "the only right would be found to exist in parliament, describing it as a right capable of so effectually providing for the deficiency of the third branch of the legislature, as to enable them to appoint a power to give sanction to their proceedings, in the same manner, as if the king was present. As the power of filling the throne rested with the people at the revolution, so, at the present moment, on the same principles of liberty, on the same rights of parliament, did the providing for the deficiency rest with the people. He declared, that he felt himself inadequate to the great task of stating the rights and privileges of the constitution, and of parliament; but he had made it appear, as plainly as he could, that no right existed any where to exercise the whole or any part, of the royal prerogatives, during the indisposition of the sovereign. He had also proved, that, from the necessity of the case, it rested with that and the other house of parliament, to provide for the deficiency in the legislature. He supposed that doubts might be stated as to the propriety of coming to any decision on the question, and that he might be charged with having stirred notions dangerous to the state; but such questions, he begged it to be remembered, he had not stirred. When questions concerning the rights of the people, the rights of the parliament, and the interests of the nation, were started, it was necessary, if the house had a right on the subject, to exercise that right: it was their duty; it was a matter that could by no means be lightly given up. If it was their duty, in the present calamitous state of the nation, to grant

power, they ought to know how they granted such power. They must decide, either in the manner of a choice, or acting judicially, to recognise a claim of right; and if they recognized such a claim, it would be an acknowledgment that they had no power to deliberate on the subject. If they did not come to some decision, they would confound their own proceedings, and it would be highly dangerous to posterity, in point of precedent. They were not, therefore, to consult their own convenience. He remarked that, originally, the claim of right had been asserted by the right honourable gentleman, in strong and lofty terms, but that the tone had been since somewhat lowered. He declared he could see no possibility of the committee proceeding a single step farther, without knowing on what kind of ground they proceeded; and, therefore, it became indispensably necessary to have the question of right decided. The danger of the question originated in its having been stirred, not in its being decided; the danger of the stirring would be done away by the division, but leaving it undecided and equivocal would be highly dangerous. The decision of both houses could be attended with no dissention, but if the right of parliament, was not confirmed, the measures of both houses would be imputed, he feared, rather to motives of personal interest and convenience than to a due regard for the interest of the country. The measures which he meant to propose were dictated by no other motive than an anxious desire, in conformity to his duty, to provide for the safety of the king, the rights of parliament, and the interests of the people."

Mr. Pitt previous to the conclusion of his speech, adverted to what he described as the opinions stated

by a noble lord (Lord Rawdon) in another place, in contradiction to his assertion, that the Prince of Wales had no more right to assume the regency than any other individual subject. - He said, that " he understood that in arguing that matter, some very extraordinary modes of reasoning had been resorted to. Among other conceived proofs that the rights of the Prince of Wales were different from those of other subjects, it had been contended, that the Prince of Wales was, in an old record, quoted by Lord Coke, pronounced one and the same with the king. The fact certainly was so; but to draw from such a circumstance an argument, that the prince had a right to exercise the sovereign authority, under the present circumstances of his Majesty's unfortunate incapacity, was an instance so monstrous, that he should think he deserved censure for sporting with the gravity of the house, if he suffered himself to treat it with the least gravity whatsoever. In truth a very different conclusion might be drawn from the whole of that record, the metaphorical language of which was not to be taken in a literal sense, in that or any other point of so much importance. Another position laid down at the same time, and in the same place, was, that the Prince of Wales, as heir apparent and being of full age, could assume the exercise of the sovereign authority, if his Majesty's infirmity had occurred when the parliament were not sitting: but that doctrine had been so expressly contradicted in that house, by the right honourable gentleman opposite to him, when the subject was last agitated, that it was needless for him to say a syllable more relative to its nature. A third argument, urged in support of the prince's right, was, that

a Prince of Wales could sue out an execution, as king, in a cause in which he had obtained a judgment as Prince of Wales. But what was there decidedly conclusive in this position? The Prince of Wales had this advantage over other subjects, was obvious. If the son of a peer who had maintained a suit in the court of Westminster Hall and obtained a judgment, succeeded to his father's honours before he had sued out an execution, he could not sue out an execution, without previously identifying himself, and satisfying the court that he was the same person who had prosecuted the suit, and obtained the judgment. And why was not the Prince of Wales obliged to do the same? For this plain reason, the courts of Westminster Hall are holden in the name of the king, and, therefore, in his own courts, it must be a matter of notoriety, that on the demise of the crown, the Prince of Wales had succeeded to it, and became king; but were these arguments multiplied ten times over, what did they prove? Merely that the prince had rights, of some sort or other, peculiar to himself; but did they prove that he had a right to exercise the sovereign authority, on his father's incapacity, without the consent and declared approbation of the two remaining branches of the legislature? No more than a proof, that a man having an estate in Middlesex was a proof that he had another in Cornwall, and a third in Yorkshire. In fact, all these arguments put together, regarded and considered with a reference to the point in dispute, whether the Prince of Wales, as heir apparent, had a right to exercise the sovereign authority, during the incapacity of his Majesty, were so irrelevant, so foreign to the question, and so perfectly absurd, that they were

not to be relied on as law, even if they came from the mouth of a judge.

“ With respect to the strong and lofty assertion that had been at first made of the right of the Prince of Wales, as heir apparent, to assume the exercise of the sovereignty, it was sufficient to observe that this doctrine was retracted. Upon this occasion, he should beg leave to recal the word and say, not retracted, but disavowed. This reminded him of the precedent in the reign of Henry the sixth, during which, the Duke of Gloucester quarrelled with the Bishop of Winchester, which disagreement rose so high, and was carried so far, that at length the duke brought a criminal charge against the bishop, accusing him of having in a former reign, advised the Prince of Wales, afterwards Henry the fifth, to assume the sovereign authority in the life time of his father, Henry the fourth. Though the charge, if proved, would have been high treason, the bishop desired that it might be referred to the judges, and that its validity might be determined by the strictest investigation. The quarrel, however, was compromised, on grounds of personal convenience, and the charge never came to a legal decision.”

Mr. Pitt having endeavoured by many arguments to establish the right of the two houses of parliament to provide the means of supplying the defect in the case of the king's incapacity to exercise the sovereign authority, expressed his hopes “ that he should impress the house with a conviction, that if they had a right, they had also a duty ;—a duty, which neither their allegiance nor their affection to their sovereign would allow them to dispense with. It was their duty at this

time, not only unequivocally to declare their right, so that it might remain ascertained, beyond the possibility of all question hereafter, and become secured to posterity, but to proceed, without delay, to exercise their right, and provide the means of supplying the defect of the personal exercise of the royal authority, arising from his Majesty's indisposition. Upon no account did it appear probable that their decision could either occasion a dissention between the two houses of parliament, or produce mischievous consequences of any kind whatsoever. On the contrary, if the right were not declared, as well as decided, it would appear that the two houses had made a compromise, unbecoming themselves, and had acted upon personal motives, rather than a due regard to the true interests of their country." Mr. Pitt then read his resolutions as follow:—

I. "That it is the opinion of this committee, that his Majesty is prevented, by his present indisposition, from coming to his parliament, and from attending to public business, and that the personal exercise of the royal authority is thereby, for the present interrupted.

II. "That it is the opinion of this committee, that it is the right and duty of the lords spiritual and temporal and commons of Great Britain, now assembled, and lawfully, fully, and freely representing all the estates of the people of this realm, to provide the means of supplying the defect of the personal exercise of the royal authority, arising from his Majesty's said indisposition, in such manner as the exigency of the case may appear to require.

Resolved, "That for this purpose, and for maintaining entire the constitutional authority of the

king, it is necessary, that the said lords spiritual and temporal and commons of Great Britain, should determine on the means whereby the royal assent may be given in parliament to such bills as may be passed by the two houses of parliament ; respecting the exercise of the powers and authorities of the crown, in the name, and on the behalf, of the king, during the continuance of his Majesty's present indisposition."

To the violent conflict which the latter proposition had excited, after the first had been carried unanimously, Mr. Pitt thus coolly answered :—

He observed, " it was not without some astonishment that he discovered, that the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Fox) had thought proper, particularly in the latter part of his speech, to digress from the question of right, which was then before the house, in order to enter upon the question of expediency, and that not so much for the purpose even of discussing that expediency as to take an opportunity of introducing an attack of a personal nature on him. The house would recollect, whether the manner in which he (Mr. Pitt) had opened the debate, either provoked or justified this animosity. This attack which the right honourable gentleman had just now made, he declared to be unfounded, arrogant, and presumptuous. The right honourable gentleman had charged him, as acting from a mischievous spirit of ambition, unable to bear the idea of parting with power, which he had so long retained ; but not expecting the favor of the prince, which he was conscious he had not deserved, and therefore disposed to envy and obstruct the credit of those, who were to be his successors. Whether to him belonged that character of mischie-

vous ambition which would sacrifice the principles of the constitution to a desire of power, he must leave to the house and the country to determine. They would decide, whether, in the whole of his conduct, during this unfortunate crisis, any consideration which affected his own personal situation, or any management for the sake of preserving power, appeared to have had the chief share in deciding the measures he had proposed. As to his being conscious, that he did not deserve the favour of the prince, he could only say, that he knew but one way, in which he, or any man, could deserve it ; by having uniformly endeavoured, in a public situation, to do his duty to the king his father, and to the country at large. If, in thus endeavouring to deserve the confidence of the prince, it should appear, that he in fact had lost it, however painful and mortifying that circumstance might be to him, and from whatever cause it might proceed, he should indeed regret it, but he could boldly say, that it was impossible he should ever repent of it.

“ The right honourable gentleman had thought proper to announce himself, and his friends to be the successors of the present administration. He did not know on what authority the right honourable gentleman made this declaration ; but he thought, that with a view to those questions of expediency, which the right honourable gentleman had introduced, both the house and the country were obliged to him for this seasonable warning of what they would have to expect. The nation had already had experience of that right honourable gentleman and his principles. Without meaning to use terms of reproach, or to enter into any imputation concerning his motives, it could not be denied, that they were open and professedly active, on the

ground of procuring an advantage, from the strength of a party, to nominate the ministers of the crown. It could not be denied, that it was maintained as a fundamental principle, that a minister ought at all times so to be nominated. He would therefore speak plainly. If persons, who possessed those principles, were in reality likely to be the advisers of the prince, in the exercise of those powers which were necessary to be given, during the present unfortunate interval, it was the strongest additional reason, if any were wanting, for being careful to consider what the extent of those powers ought to be. It was impossible not to suppose, that, by such advisers, those powers would be perverted to a purpose, which it was impossible to imagine that the Prince of Wales could, if he was aware of it, even endure for a moment; but to which, by artifice and misrepresentation, he might unintentionally be made accessory, for the purpose of creating a permanent weight and influence, in the hands of a party, which would be dangerous to the just rights of the crown, when the moment should arrive, (so much wished, and, perhaps, so soon to be expected,) of his Majesty's being able to resume the exercise of his own authority. The notice, therefore, which the right honourable gentleman in his triumph had condescended to give to the house, furnished the most irresistible reason for them deliberately to consider, lest in providing for the means of carrying on the administration, during a short and temporary interval, they might sacrifice the permanent interest of the country, in future, by laying the foundation of such measures, as might, for ever afterwards during the continuance of his Majesty's reign, obstruct the

just and salutary exercise of the constitutional powers of government, in the hands of its rightful possessor, the sovereign, whom they all revered and loved.

“ The noble lord in the blue ribbon, (Lord North) like most of the gentlemen who had spoken on that side of the house, had argued, not against the truth of the resolutions, but the propriety of coming to them, and had waved any dispute on the question of right. The right honourable gentleman, though he affected, also, to object to the propriety of coming to this resolution, had directed his whole argument, as far as it went, to an invalidation of the truth of the proposition and the maintenance of his former assertion, in favour of the existing right of the Prince of Wales. This line of argument, supported by such authority was itself an answer to those who doubted the propriety of any resolution.

“ The right honourable gentleman had ventured to represent him, as having declined maintaining his former assertion, ‘ That the Prince of Wales had no more right to the regency, than any other subject in the country,’ and he had also intimated, that he had thus retracted, in consequence of believing that not twenty persons would join in supporting that proposition. But it so happened, that he did not retract one single word of that assertion. Gentlemen might quarrel with the phrase, if they thought proper, and misrepresent it, in imitation of the right honourable gentleman, in order to cover the arguments used by a noble lord (Lord Loughborough) in another place. But he was in the recollection of the house, whether when he first used the expression, he had not guarded it, as meaning to speak strictly of a claim of right, not of any reasons of

preference, on the ground of discretion or expediency. He was also in their recollection, whether the right he spoke of, was any other than the specific right in question, namely, the right to exercise the royal authority, under the present circumstances. He had maintained that the prince had no such right. If the prince had not the right, he could not be said to have any more right than any other subject in the country. But was it any answer to the assertion, that as Prince of Wales he had no right to the regency, to say that he had other rights, different from the rest of the king's subjects, but which had nothing to do with the regency? Yet all the rights of the Prince of Wales, which had been mentioned by the noble lord alluded to, were of this description. It would be just as reasonable if the question were, whether any person had a right to a particular estate in Kent or Surrey? To argue, yes, he has, for he has such and such an estate in Yorkshire and in Cornwall. With regard to the question, whether twenty persons did or did not agree in his denial of the right of the Prince of Wales, he would put the whole on that issue, that if the Prince of Wales had any such right, the resolution he had moved could not be true; and he considered every person who differed from his assertion on that subject, as bound to vote against the present motion.

“The right honourable gentleman, in discussing the question of right, chose also to remark, that the right of the two houses, and the right of the Prince of Wales, were to be considered as two rival rights, and that the only question was, in favour of which the argument preponderated. He should be perfectly ready to meet the question on this issue, if it were the true one, for the right of the two houses was clearly sup-

ported by precedent and usage, in every similar case, by express declarations of parliament, and by positive authority of law; yet the right of the Prince of Wales was not even attempted to be supported on any of those grounds, but on pretended reasons of expediency, founded on imaginary and extravagant cases. In fact this was not the fair issue of the argument. The right of the Prince of Wales was not to be considered as a rival right to be argued on the same grounds as the other. It was a right which could not exist, unless it was capable of being expressly and positively proved; whereas the right of parliament was that which existed of course, unless some other right could be proved to exclude it,—was that, which, on the principles of this free constitution must always exist in every case, where no positive provision had been made by law, and where the necessity of the case and the safety of the country called for their interposition. The absence of any other right, was in itself enough to constitute the right of the two houses; and the bare admission that the right of the Prince of Wales was not clearly and expressly proved, virtually operated as an admission of every point under discussion.”

The resolutions now being carried, and the parties completely at issue on one of the greatest national questions that ever was agitated in any senate, Mr. Pitt, who had already communicated on the subject with the Prince of Wales, now addressed to his royal highness the following letter, upon the plan which he had prepared for the temporary government of the kingdom, and which while it affords the clearest view of his own principles on this subject, will supply the only specimen we can offer of his epistolary talents.

“ SIR,

“THE proceedings in parliament being now brought to a point, which will render it necessary to propose to the house of commons, the particular measures to be taken for supplying the defect of the personal exercise of the royal authority during the present interval, and your Royal Highness having some time since signified your pleasure, that any communication on this subject should be in writing, I take the liberty of respectfully entreating your Royal Highness's permission to submit to your consideration, the outlines of the plan which his Majesty's confidential servants humbly conceive (according to the best judgment which they are able to form,) to be proper to be proposed in the present circumstances.

“ It is their humble opinion that your Royal Highness should be empowered to exercise the royal authority in the name and on the behalf of his Majesty, during his Majesty's illness, and to do all acts which might legally be done by his Majesty; with provisions, nevertheless, that the care of his Majesty's royal person, and the management of his Majesty's household, and the direction and appointment of the officers and servants therein, should be in the Queen, under such regulations as may be thought necessary.— That the power to be exercised by your Royal Highness, should not extend to the granting of the real or personal property of the king, (except as far as relates to the renewal of leases) to the granting of any office in reversion, or to the granting, for any other term than during his Majesty's pleasure, of any pension or any office whatever, except such as must by law be

granted for life, or during good behaviour, nor to the granting of any rank or dignity of the peerage of this realm to any person, except his Majesty's issue, who shall have attained the age of twenty one years.

“ These are the chief points which have occurred to his Majesty's servants. I beg leave to add, that their ideas are formed on the supposition that his Majesty's illness is only temporary, and may be of no long duration. It may be difficult to fix beforehand, the precise period for which these provisions ought to last; but if, unfortunately, his Majesty's recovery should be protracted to a more distant period than there is reason at present to imagine, it will be open hereafter to the wisdom of parliament, to reconsider these provisions whenever the circumstances may appear to call for it.

“ If your Royal Highness should be pleased to require any further explanation on the subject, and should condescend to signify your orders, that I should have the honor of attending your Royal Highness for that purpose, or to intimate any other mode in which your Royal Highness may wish to receive such explanation, I shall respectfully wait your Royal Highness's commands.

“ I have the honour to be,

“ With the utmost deference and submission,

“ SIR,

“ Your Royal Highness's

“ Most dutiful and devoted servant,

“ W. PITT.

“ *Downing Street,*

“ *Tuesday Night, Dec. 30, 1788.*”

The following answer which was promptly returned to Mr. Pitt, and conferred considerable credit on his royal highness the Prince and those gentlemen in his particular confidence, has been generally considered as not a little indebted to the advice of Mr. Sheridan.

“ The Prince of Wales learns from Mr. Pitt’s letter that the proceedings in parliament are now in a train which enables Mr. Pitt, according to the intimation in his former letter, to communicate to the Prince, the outlines of the plan which his Majesty’s confidential servants conceive to be proper to be proposed in the present circumstances.

“ Concerning the steps already taken by Mr. Pitt, the Prince is silent. Nothing done by the two houses of parliament can be a proper subject of his animadversion ; but when previously to any discussion in parliament, the outlines of a scheme of government are sent for his consideration, in which it is proposed that he shall be personally and principally concerned, and by which the royal authority and public welfare may be deeply affected, the Prince would be unjustifiable, were he to withhold an explicit declaration of his sentiments. This silence might be construed into a previous approbation of a plan, the accomplishment of which every motive of duty to his father and sovereign, as well as of regard for the public interest obliges him to consider as injurious to both.

“ In the state of deep distress in which the Prince, and the whole Royal Family were involved ; by the heavy calamity which has fallen upon the king, and at a moment when government, deprived of its chief energy and support, seemed peculiarly to need the cordial and

united aid of all descriptions of good subjects, it was not expected by the Prince, that a plan should be offered to his consideration, by which government was to be rendered difficult, if not impracticable, in the hands of any person intended to represent the king's authority, much less in the hands of his eldest son—the heir apparent of his kingdoms, and the person most bound to the maintenance of his Majesty's just prerogatives and authority, as well as most interested in the happiness, the prosperity, and the glory of the people.

“ The Prince forbears to remark on the several parts of the sketch of the plan laid before him ; he apprehends it must have been formed with sufficient deliberation to preclude the probability of any argument of his producing an alteration of sentiment in the projectors of it. But he trusts, with confidence, to the wisdom and justice of parliament, when the whole of this subject, and the circumstances connected with it, shall come under their deliberation.

“ He observes, therefore, only generally on the heads communicated by Mr. Pitt—and it is with deep regret the Prince makes the observation, that he sees, in the contents of that paper, a project for producing weakness, disorder and insecurity in every branch of the administration of affairs.—A project for dividing the royal family from each other—for separating the court from the state ; and, therefore, by disjoining government from its natural and accustomed support ; a scheme for disconnecting the authority to command service, from the power of animating it by reward ; and for allotting to the Prince all the invidious duties of government, without the means of softening them

to the public, by any one act of grace, favour, or benignity.

“ The Prince’s feelings on contemplating this plan, are also rendered still more painful to him, by observing that it is not founded on any general principle, but is calculated to inspire jealousies and suspicions (wholly groundless, he trusts) in that quarter, whose confidence it will ever be the first pride of his life to merit and obtain.

“ With regard to the motive and object of the limitation and instructions proposed, the Prince can have but little to observe, no light or information is offered him by his Majesty’s ministers on these points. They have informed him what the powers are which they mean to refuse him, not why they are withheld.

“ The Prince, however, holding as he does, that it is an undoubted and fundamental principle of this constitution, that the powers and prerogatives of the crown are vested there, as a trust for the benefit of the people; and that they are sacred only as they are necessary to the preservation of that poise and balance of the constitution, which experience has proved to be the true security of the liberty of the subject—must be allowed to observe, that the plan of public utility ought to be strong, manifest, and urgent, which calls for the extinction or suspension of any one of those essential rights in the supreme power, or its representative; or which can justify the Prince in consenting, that, in his person an experiment shall be made to ascertain with how small a portion of kingly power the executive government of this country may be carried on.

“ The Prince has only to add, that if security for

his Majesty's repossessing his rightful government, whenever it shall please Providence, in bounty to the country, to remove the calamity with which he is afflicted, be any part of the object of this plan, the Prince has only to be convinced that any measure is necessary, or even conducive to that end, to be the first to seize it as the preliminary and permanent consideration of any settlement in which he would consent to share.

“ If attention to what it is presumed might be his Majesty's feelings and wishes on the happy day of his recovery, be the object, it is with the truest sincerity the Prince expresses his firm conviction, that no event would be more repugnant to the feelings of his royal father, than the knowledge that the government of his son and representative had exhibited the sovereign power of the realm in a state of degradation, of curtailed authority, and diminished energy—a state hurtful in practice to the prosperity and good government of his people, and injurious in its precedent to the security of the monarch, and the rights of his family.

“ Upon that part of the plan which regards the king's real and personal property, the Prince feels himself compelled to remark that it was not necessary for Mr. Pitt, nor proper, to suggest to the Prince the restraint he proposes against the Prince's granting away the king's real or personal property. The Prince does not conceive, that, during the king's life, he is, by law, entitled to make any such grant; and he is sure, that he has never shewn the smallest inclination to possess any such power. But it remains with Mr. Pitt to consider the essential interests of the royal family,

and to provide a proper and natural security against the mismanagement of them by others.

“ The Prince has discharged an indispensable duty, in thus giving his free opinion on the plan submitted to his consideration.

“ This conviction of the evils which may arise to the king’s interests, to the peace and happiness of the royal family, and to the safety and welfare of the nation, from the government of the country remaining longer in its present maimed and debilitated state, outweighs, in the Prince’s mind, every other consideration, and will determine him to undertake the painful trust imposed upon him by the present melancholy necessity (which of all the king’s subjects he deprecates the most) in full confidence, that the affection and loyalty to the king, the experienced attachment to the house of Brunswick, and the generosity which has always distinguished this nation, will carry him through the many difficulties, inseparable from this most critical situation, with comfort to himself, with honour to the king, and with advantage to the public.

“ G. P.

“ *Carlton House,*

“ *January 2, 1789.*”

Whatever the real effect of this answer had on the mind of Mr. Pitt, although it did not bend his manly principles into acquiescence with its views of the subject, it certainly must be admitted to have rendered him more desirous of conciliating the various opinions it had created.

On the 16th of January, 1789, the subject was resumed, when this effect was very apparent.

Mr. Pitt opened his remarks by expressing concern at perceiving "that the particular situation of the country called upon them to exercise a right that had devolved upon them in consequence of the melancholy situation of his Majesty, which rendered him incapable of exercising the royal authority. Upon the present distressful occasion, it behoved them to provide the means of supplying the deficiency: but, in doing so, he trusted that it must be the wish of every gentleman, that they should proceed in the manner the best calculated to give general satisfaction, and the most likely to secure the approbation of the people, which, he had the happiness to know, had generally attended every step which they had hitherto taken. He sincerely wished that every measure which he should have the honour to propose, might be fully discussed, and fairly decided upon; that the nature of the case, the general principles on which they ought to proceed, and the application of those principles, might be clearly and distinctly pointed out. In so doing they would be best enabled to meet the emergency which called upon them, and to provide for the defect of the personal exercise of the royal authority.

"The business of the committee lay in a very narrow compass, notwithstanding the voluminous reports on the table. In the report last delivered, there was abundant matter of confirmation to him of the propriety and prudence of those measures which he was, as the committee were aware, prepared to have proposed to them nearly ten days ago. But, though there was much material information in that report, there was no difference, in his opinion, in the ground of what he had to offer, as, on the former day, as well as

on the present, the committee had more information before them than was sufficient to bear out all that he would submit to their consideration. Had he, on the former day, felt it necessary to state the ground on which he intended to have built his proceedings, he would have stated it thus, "That his Majesty was incapable of meeting his parliament, or attending to public business; that the unanimous opinion of his physicians was, that his Majesty's recovery was more probable than the contrary, and that all the physicians agreed that it was impossible to ascertain when the so much wished for event might take place: but that those, who were more immediately conversant with the disorder with which his Majesty was afflicted, had declared that the majority were cured; and that one of the physicians, the most conversant of any, had stated, that the greatest length of time he had ever known the disorder to continue was a year and a half, or two years, that the shortest was three months, and the average five or six months." In saying even that, he would have said more than was necessary for any argument on the principle on which he went. What they had to provide for, therefore, was no more than an interval, and he flattered himself that it would prove but a short interval. If, however, unfortunately, his Majesty's illness should be protracted, they might leave it to parliament to do what was at present clearly unnecessary—to consider of a more permanent plan of government. If they regarded the disorder not in itself incurable, every man must admit that the provisions ought not to be permanent. Mr. Pitt now recapitulated what had passed concerning the subject upon the Tuesday se'nnight, and the line of argument that

had been adopted, which rendered it impossible for him to avoid giving way to a more narrow and minute enquiry than had before taken place; and, however he might feel pain on account of some particular points which had passed in the committee, he could not, upon the whole, but rejoice that he had given way, as it now appeared, that the argument on which the right honourable gentleman had relied, viz. that, because a month had elapsed since the former enquiry, his Majesty's cure was to be considered as the more improbable, was not grounded; and as, however, much they disagreed in other points, they were unanimous that the probability of the cure rested precisely on the same grounds as before;—a circumstance which he was persuaded, would give as much pleasure to the right honourable gentleman as it had done to himself.

“With regard to the difference of opinion between the physicians, as to the prospect of a recovery, it appeared to him to depend on two circumstances, by which it could be decided on whose opinion the greatest reliance ought to be placed. The first circumstance was the knowledge of the malady in general; and the second the knowledge of the particular case of the patient. Three of his Majesty's physicians had been conversant with the malady. Two others, though not so conversant, were well acquainted with his Majesty's habits. These two, (Sir George Baker and Dr. Warren) attended his Majesty for two hours each day; the three others from the evening until eleven in the forenoon. Surely it was natural for those who attended his Majesty most, to be the best judges of his situation; and it was remarkable that Dr. Warren and Sir George Baker were the least confident of a cure, and

the other doctors had much greater hopes; but Dr. Willis, who attended his Majesty more than any of the others, was more sanguine than them all. Sir Lucas Pepys stated circumstances which did not amount to a certainty, of a cure, but which proved an abatement of his Majesty's disorder. Dr. Willis was of opinion that all the symptoms since the time of the last examination, were more favourable. In a word, all the physicians agreed in the probability of his Majesty's recovery, and that the length of the time made no unfavourable change; those, too, who understood the disorder best, thought it more favourable.

“For his own part, he wished not to go at length into the particulars of the last report, on which the committee might safely rely, as there were those on the committee who were anxious to report, with the most scrupulous accuracy, every point likely to prove his Majesty's recovery. There had been those who gave no considerable degree of credit to Dr. Willis; if, therefore, any observations should arise from them, he conceived they would be made in the same spirit, and with the same ability, as when they were urged in the committee above stairs. Upon this occasion, he felt it but common justice to commend the skill, integrity, and good sense of Dr. Willis, which were evinced under a severe cross-examination, calculated to puzzle simplicity, and leave the coolness which should, of necessity, accompany the delivery of evidence, too unguarded. However it might suit with the political intrigues of the times, or be convenient to circulate them at present in London and its environs, he would not anticipate the remarks which had been made; but, if there were any such remarks to be advanced, he de-

sited, if they chose to discuss the credit of either this or that physician, that they might understand the nature of the imputation. In the course of the enquiry above stairs, circumstances had come out, over which he would not draw a veil of delicacy, as he was not ashamed to bring it forward. If it be stated to the discredit of any physician, that he had submitted to be unduly influenced by a great personage, let the committee know to what physician the imputation of having consented to give an untrue account of the state of his Majesty's health applied : if an impropriety of transaction like that was imputed, he would not believe it till it was distinctly *ventured* to be said, and when he used the term *venture*, he did not mean to use it with regard to the exalted station of the person in question, but with regard to the transaction itself; nor did he (he repeated it) believe that any man would *venture* to charge blame of any kind on the respectable personage in question, who had lived for almost thirty years in this country without traduction, a pattern of the most unexampled affection, domestic tenderness, and virtue; against whom the breath of calumny had not dared to send forth even a whisper; and who could not merit it at a moment, when visited by a calamity which rarely befalls a private person, but which surely was not a little aggravated when it becomes the lot of the family of a person in so exalted a rank as the sovereign of the country. As to the fact itself, it appeared that Dr. Warren allowed that apparent circumstances of an amendment began to appear; and there was, in consequence, a wish on the part of her Majesty that the report might be such as should give the public the most favourable account

of his Majesty's health ; but would any man prove that any undue influence had been used for that purpose ? Mr. Pitt explained in what manner the words *a comfortable way*, had been introduced into the report, and then spoke of Dr. Willis, declaring that he was known in the country where he lived, by his character, and by the happiness which he had been the means of giving to the numerous families who were bound to bless him for the good effects of his skill. He mentioned another physician, whose character was likewise high, but declared that, if he wished to draw a true conclusion of his Majesty's state of health and prospect of recovery, he would wish to draw it from Dr. Willis more than any other man."

At length Mr. Pitt adverted to the situation for which they were to provide, and "this situation was no less than the cessation of the personal exercise of the royal authority ; a deficiency for which no previous provision had been made. As the cause of this deficiency, he had every reason to think, would prove but temporary, they must deliberately consider what were the cases for which they were to apply a remedy. The first object for which they had to provide was to secure the establishment of a government in the country, equal to its safety and the dispatch of public business. Out of the nature of such a provision another duty arose, of equal importance to the other ; and this was to take care that the measure embraced did not go beyond the necessity. The committee were to provide powers for the exercise of the government, and they must take care to place those powers in proper hands ; but, above all things, to recollect, that they were not placing a king on the throne. They

were to remember that the throne was full, that no right any where existed to exercise the royal authority, but that which was conferred by that house; they were to take care to provide against any embarrassment in the resumption of the regal authority, whenever God in his providence should permit the rightful holder again to exercise it. They were to provide only for the necessity of the case, and not to exceed it; and therefore the measures which he should propose, would be to invest his royal highness the Prince of Wales with the whole royal authority, to be exercised in the name, and on the behalf of his Majesty, under such limitations and restrictions only as should be provided. The principle was not new, although the circumstances of the case happened to be unprecedented. No man would say that the same power which the principal exercised, ought to be given to the delegate; and if the house referred to precedents, they would find that no one instance could be met with of the whole of the royal prerogatives having been so delegated. On the contrary, every precedent which bore the smallest analogy to the present situation, evinced the direct contrary, and that, doubtless, with a view to facilitate and ensure the resignation of the delegate, when the principal would be competent to exercise or to resume his authority. Referring them to the act of queen Anne, (the act of succession) the regency act of George the Second, and the regency act of the present king, Mr. Pitt added, let them look at the case of a sovereign disabled by infancy. Was the regent of the country invested with full and unlimited power to exercise the royal authority? Undoubtedly not. In the three regency bills in

the statute books to which he adverted, were there not limitations? There were in every one. All the powers might be given, but then they were not given to one person. What was the principle in a case of minority? It was thought unsafe to vest all the powers in one person. He laid particular stress on the regency bill of George the Second, and observed, that there appeared at that time to have been a wish on both sides of the house, to doubt what confidence should be placed in the regent. They were afraid of making a precedent, and therefore they gave the royal powers among many, appointing a council, without whose consent the regent could take no important step whatever. The will of the predecessor was, by one of the bills, to be the system followed while the heir apparent continued a minor;—a principle which he owned he thought went too far, although it was a plausible principle, and was apparently most applicable to the present case. After reasoning on the three different precedents, and touching upon the short protectorate of Richard the Third, and the other protectorates or guardianships in the earlier periods of our history, and endeavouring to demonstrate by argument, that as, in no preceding instance, all the powers of royalty were given to one person, so, in the present instance, which certainly differed most essentially, they ought not to be, nor could they be, trusted in the hands of one person, without proving a hazardous, and, possibly a prejudicial experiment; he declared that he would give his vote for investing the regent with all the powers which are necessary, but would not agree to give any which were not requisite to carry on the government of the country with energy and effect."

Mr. Pitt now observed, " that he need not trouble the house with his first resolution, as he had already stated its substance and effect. The second resolution, (which he read,) was to restrain the regent from exercising one branch of the prerogative peculiarly inherent in the crown, and this was the power of granting peerages, excepting to his Majesty's sons, being twenty-one years of age. This restriction he thought necessary, as the regent ought not to confer any grant which might produce difficulties and embarrassments, when the happy hour of his Majesty's restoration to his health should arrive. The object of investing the crown with the power of creating peers, was to enable the sovereign to distribute rewards to eminent merit, and to give the crown the means of choosing persons who should add to the number of one of the branches of the legislature. The creation of peers was one of those powers which belonged personally to the king. When he made this assertion, he scarcely meant to inculcate that it was the individual right of the king to create peers, but that it was an especial prerogative of the crown. He enumerated the grounds on which he conceived that the crown might exercise the privilege of making peers, and described what he regarded as the inconveniences which might follow from the regent having the power to make peers, contending it was possible that the consequence of the House of Lords might be lost, the system of the country overturned, and the government end in a pure monarchy, an aristocracy, an oligarchy, or some resource equally distant from our present constitution. He desired, if he failed to enumerate any particulars connected with any part of the subject, to have them pointed out to him. He

reasoned upon the sort of effect, which, as he supposed, might arise from depriving the regent of the power of creating peers, merely for a time, observing, that surely it would not be contended, that for want of such an incentive for a few months, the country was likely to be deprived of the service of men of merit. If his Majesty recovered, as they all hoped, and had reason to expect he would, the power of creating peers might be exercised by the rightful holder of the prerogative; but if, unfortunately, his Majesty should grow worse, and be pronounced not likely to recover for a long time, parliament would have it in its power to take off the restriction, and vest the regent with a power, which, though not at present, he was ready to admit, might in time become necessary to the carrying on of a powerful government. He mentioned the fluctuation of wealth and property in the country, and the propriety of occasionally raising monied men to the peerage, in order to give the landed interest its fair balance and share of the honours in the power of the crown to bestow. He alluded also to the sort of hands into which the conduct of public affairs was likely to fall, and said, that unless they had reason to expect a desperate confederacy and cabal to obstruct the public measures, he saw no sort of inconvenience which could result from a temporary withholding from the regent the power of making peers; he urged the possibility of such another confederacy and cabal forming, (as had been convicted of a design to overthrow the constitution a few years since,) who might give the regent advice which the crown would probably have rejected, and such a number of peers might be created, as might considerably embarrass the crown in carrying

on the government when his Majesty should be restored to his health. For his own part, he meant to make no professions, but he desired that what he was going to say might be considered as the test of his future conduct: and, he declared, that he should not be found an opposer of the just, and wise measures of the new government, which would remain to be discussed hereafter. He urged other arguments in the attempt to prove, that the withholding of the power of making peers for a time, was what they owed to the real interests of the country and the true sovereign; that it could not become prejudicial to the regent's government; and if it should threaten to grow detrimental, they would have the remedy in their own hands;—a principle which was coupled with that of doing nothing beyond the real necessity of the case. At the first view, the principles which he had laid down might be supposed not to confine themselves merely to one branch of the legislature, and it could be contended, that, as the present House of Commons had proved themselves so loyal to the sovereign, and attentive to the interests of his people, his Majesty would be happy to receive the congratulations of the same House of Commons on his recovery; but a little more consideration would shew, that this would perhaps be reserving from the people an opportunity of shewing their sense of the conduct of their representatives; and no danger could accrue to the sovereign in sending them back to their constituents, if the regent should deem it wise or prudent to adopt the measure, especially to a people whose loyalty had been so conspicuously manifested by the general and heartfelt sor-

row expressed throughout the kingdom, in consequence of his Majesty's melancholy situation and illness."

He now read the third resolution, which was a restriction preventing the regent from allowing any grant, patent, place, reversion, or annuity for life, excepting in particular, unavoidable cases, such as to judges and others. As this resolution ran so much upon the principle of the preceding one, Mr. Pitt said it was unnecessary for him to go into farther explanation of it. The fourth resolution restrained the regent from exercising any power over the personal property of the king. Mr. Pitt on this occasion observed, that "he scarcely thought it necessary to pass this resolution, as it was not probable that his royal highness would interfere with his Majesty's personal property in his life time; but, as they were acting upon parliamentary principles, he thought it his duty to submit it to the committee. The last resolution would be for entrusting the care of the royal person, during his Majesty's illness, where of course all men would be unanimous in agreeing that the royal person ought to be placed, in the guardianship of the queen; and with this trust, his intention was, to propose to put the whole of his Majesty's household under the authority of her Majesty, investing her with full powers to dismiss and appoint, as she should think proper. Without being invested with this control, he imagined that the queen could not discharge the important trust committed to her care. He spoke of the officers of high rank in the household, who, though their places might justly draw forth the ambition of men of the first rank and family in the kingdom, were, nevertheless, only the first me-

nial servants of his Majesty, and actually necessary to direct and superintend the greater part of his Majesty's household. He stated that these offices, such as the master of the horse, lord chamberlain, lord steward, and others, were, by many, thought high offices of state; but the fact was otherwise, they were the menial servants of the crown, and essential to its dignity and splendor. He argued against new modelling the royal household, under the present circumstances, and spoke of the anxiety and pain which he conceived it must give his Majesty, to find all those whom he had chosen to be about his royal person discharged. Possibly, his Majesty's illness might continue but a few months, perhaps a few weeks; and, in such a situation, would it, he asked, be delicate and respectful to make a change? Those who were lords of the bed-chamber, he admitted, did no great duty at present, but the equeries were employed. He owned, that this part of the arrangement was a matter of some difficulty; but when he considered what his Majesty would feel, when he waked from his trance of reason, and asked for those attendants, and was told that his subjects had taken advantage of his momentary absence of mind, and changed them, he flattered himself that no gentleman would object to such a mark of attention being paid to his Majesty. The regent, indeed, was different from the king; but, at the same time, the regent ought to have a retinue adequate to the importance and high rank of his station; and he meant to propose that he should have such a retinue as would unquestionably be some increase of expense to the country; but, as it was unavoidably necessary to appoint a regent, it was equally necessary to maintain the dignity of the cha-

racter, and gentlemen would not, he conceived, grudge a little expense on such an occasion. He recurred again to the power to be lodged in the hands of the queen, and urged the necessity of considering the rank of the king, the rank of the Prince of Wales, and the rank of the queen, who was consort of the sovereign, and mother of the regent. It was not to be supposed, therefore, that the influence arising from the patronage holden by the queen, would operate to the detriment of the regent's government; and, surely, to conceive as much, would be equally indecent and improper."

Mr. Pitt concluded with moving, "that it is the opinion of the committee, that, for the purpose of providing for the exercise of the King's royal authority, during the continuance of his Majesty's illness, in such manner, and to such extent, as the present circumstances of the urgent concerns of the nation appear to require, it is expedient that his royal highness the Prince of Wales, being resident within the realm, shall be empowered to exercise and administer the royal authority, according to the laws and constitution of Great Britain, in the name and on the behalf of his Majesty, under the style and title of Regent of the Kingdom, and to use, execute, and perform, in the name and on the behalf of his Majesty, all authority, prerogatives, acts of government, and administration of the same, which belong to the king of the realm, to use, execute, and perform, according to the law thereof, subject to such limitations and exceptions as shall be provided."

Any farther discussion of this delicate question was however anticipated by the most agreeable news of the recovery of his Majesty.

On it Mr. Pitt's opinions have been given thus fully, because they tend to shew better than any document, relating to any other occurrence in his administration, his views of the British constitution.

War however threatened in various instances to engage his attention more importantly during the remainder of this year. Nootka Sound became an object of contention with Spain, and the Turkish politics of Russia excited a temporary dispute relating to the fortress of Oczakow. These were soon terminated, and Mr. Pitt was left to prosecute his career with pacific glory.

But we must prepare for that great event which formed the most important period of that career, as it did an æra in the principles of modern policy, and the constitution of every government in the world.

This was the French revolution, that parent of change in almost all the political systems of mankind ; which, beginning in the internal regulations of a distracted kingdom, extended its principles throughout Europe, and almost throughout the world.

Of an event so familiar it is needless to penetrate the origin, or recite the progress. From discussing maxims of office, and systems of finance, they referred to the first principles of Government, and finding it more easy to overturn than amend, destroyed all the constitutions of society.

This mania also spread through other countries, and mankind was called to arms, not to protect a frontier, or to punish a national insult, but to defend the means by which society is held together, against the inroads of a baneful spirit that, conciliating the prejudices of the majority in numbers, threatened to

create universal anarchy, and in consequence universal misery.

It was now that Mr. Pitt stood forward, of himself an host, to protect from this insidious warfare a country to which Neptune had afforded a sufficient barrier against every other kind of hostility. Nor in justice to those coadjutors, without whose aid his task must have been even yet more difficult, must it be forgotten, that several of the most powerful members of the opposition, among whom were the Duke of Portland, Earl Fitzwilliam, and above all the great and excellent Edmund Burke, no sooner discerned the signs of the times which were about to ensue, than they quitted the connections with which they had formerly acted, to rally round the throne.*

* One of these was the following distinguished person, of whom some mention may be agreeable.—Lord Minto, (Sir Gilbert Elliot) who was born in 1751, is descended from the ancient family of Elliot, in the shire of Roxburgh, in Scotland. Of his father, even Wilkes, who attacked him, could say nothing worse than that he was a Scotsman in place. With a domestic education, he was early placed in the army, in which he is said to have borne the rank of captain at ten years old. In 1774, he became a member of the British house of commons; where, following the opinions of his father, he became one of the “king’s friends” in the arduous contests of that day. He, however, joined the party of Mr. Fox during the Rockingham administration, and, sharing its fate, continued in the ranks of opposition till the æra of the French revolution. His first employment was to accept the submission of the Corsicans, being nominated as commissioner for that purpose in the autumn of 1793; and in 1794, he assumed the government as viceroy. In 1796, however, he could no longer preserve the British dominion, and therefore returned to England; when he was raised to the dignity of a British peer



LORD ELDON.

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The consequence of that early precaution with which Mr. Pitt marked the progress of this fatal revolution, was the salvation of his country; while the effect of the timely union of such men from such patriotic and sober motives, produced in all ranks that national spirit which withstood the attempts made to seduce and destroy them.

Yet not desirous, though ready for war, Mr. Pitt did not provoke animosity between the two countries, notwithstanding the indiscreet zeal with which its go-

with the arms of Corsica, as a mark of satisfaction for his services. In 1799 his lordship was appointed ambassador to Vienna, and exhibited all the powers of diplomacy though without avail. In 1800 he advocated the cause of the union with considerable ability, but remained out of office from the peace of Amiens. His lordship is elegant and intelligent, fond of rural life, and is, it is believed, the patron of the sweet muse of *Hope*, the young and amiable Campbell.

Earl Fitzwilliam, nephew of the great Marquis of Rockingham, was born 1758, and succeeded to his title in 1766. He was bred at Eton, with Mr. Fox, Lord Carlisle, &c. and afterwards went to Oxford. He married the Lady Charlotte Ponsonby, sister of the Earl of Besborough, and was connected with all the great whig families. On the question of the French revolution, however, his lordship separated from his own friends, while he could not be said, absolutely, to join the opposite party. Possessed of considerable estates in Ireland, at the commencement of new distractions in that country, Earl Fitzwilliam was sent there as viceroy; but his government being too popular, he was suddenly recalled, after several successful arrangements. On his return his lordship held his former unique course. In 1793, he succeeded the Duke of Norfolk as lord-lieutenant of the West Riding of Yorkshire, and colonel of its militia. In this, as in his former employment, Earl Fitzwilliam became extremely popular, and he still continues the practice of many humane virtues.

vernment had cultivated an intercourse of a very inflammatory tendency with persons in England already distinguished for a restless and ungovernable disposition.

It was not, however, till the unhappy termination of the monarchical character in France that England became at war with the French republic. The same step which commenced the annunciation of hostilities, giving an opportunity for a luminous developement of his principles on the part of Mr. Pitt, is the next object of our attention, as follows:

On the 12th of February, the following message from his Majesty on the subject was delivered to parliament.

“ GEORGE R.

“ His Majesty thinks proper to acquaint the house of commons, that the assembly now executing the powers of government in France, have, without previous notice, directed acts of hostility to be committed against the persons and property of his Majesty’s subjects, in breach of the law of nations, and of the most positive stipulations of treaty, and have since, on the most groundless pretences, actually declared war against his Majesty and the United Provinces. Under the circumstances of this wanton and unprovoked aggression, his Majesty has taken the necessary steps to maintain the honour of his crown, and to vindicate the rights of his people; and his Majesty relies with confidence on the firm and effectual support of the house of commons, and on the zealous exertions of a brave and loyal people, in prosecuting a just and necessary war, and in endeavouring, under the blessing of Pro-

vidence, to oppose an effectual barrier to the farther progress of a system which strikes at the security and peace of all independent nations, and is pursued in open defiance of every principle of moderation, good faith, humanity and justice.

“ In a cause of such general concern, his Majesty has every reason to hope for the cordial co-operation of those powers who are united with his Majesty by the ties of alliance, or who feel an interest in preventing the extension of anarchy and confusion, and in contributing to the security and tranquillity of Europe.

“ G. R.”

As soon as the message was read, Mr. Pitt rose and observed, “ that in proposing to the house an address in answer to his Majesty’s message, he did not conceive that there could be any necessity, in the present instance, at least in one view of the subject for troubling them at large. Whatever difference of opinion might formerly have existed with respect to subjects, on which, however, the great majority both of that house and the nation had coincided in sentiment, whatever doubts might be entertained as to the interest, which this country had in the recent transactions on the continent, whatever question might be made of the mode of conduct which had been pursued by government, which lately had not been carried so far as to produce even a division; yet when the situation in which we now stood was considered, when those circumstances which had occurred to produce an alteration in the state of affairs since the last address, were taken into the account, he could not doubt but that there would be one unanimous sentiment and voice expressed on

the present occasion. The question now was, not what degree of danger we should find it necessary to repel, from a regard to our safety, or from a sense of honour; it was, not whether we should adopt in our measures a system of promptitude and vigour, or of tameness and procrastination; whether we should sacrifice every other consideration to the continuance of an uncertain and insecure peace—When war was declared, and the event no longer in our option, it remained only to be considered, whether we should prepare to meet it with a firm determination, and support his Majesty's government with zeal and courage against every attack. War now was not only declared, but carried on at our very doors; a war which aimed at an object no less destructive than the total ruin of the freedom and independance of this country. In this situation of affairs, he would not do so much injustice, to the members of that house, whatever differences of opinion might formerly have existed, as to suppose that there could be any but one decision, one fixed resolution, in this so urgent necessity, in this imminent and common danger, by the ardor and firmness of their support, to testify their loyalty to their sovereign, their attachment to the constitution, and their sense of those inestimable blessings which they had so long enjoyed under its influence. Confident, however, as he was, that such would be their unanimous decision, that such would be their determined and unalterable resolution, he should not consider it as altogether useless to take a view of the situation of the country at the time of his Majesty's last message, of the circumstances which had preceded and accompanied it, and

of the situation in which we now stood, in consequence of what had occurred during that interval.

“When his Majesty, by his message, informed them, that in the present situation of affairs, he considered it indispensably necessary to make a farther augmentation of his forces, they had cheerfully concurred in that object, and returned in answer, what was then the feeling of the house, the expression of their affection and zeal, and their readiness to support his Majesty in those purposes, for which he had stated an augmentation of force necessary. They saw the justice of the alarm which was then entertained, and the propriety of affording that support which was required. He should shortly state the grounds upon which they had then given their concurrence. They considered that whatever temptations might have existed to this country from ancient enmity and rivalry, paltry motives indeed! or whatever opportunity might have been afforded by the tumultuous and distracted state of France, or whatever sentiments might be excited by the transactions which had taken place in that nation, his Majesty had uniformly abstained from all interference in its internal government, and had maintained, with respect to it, on every occasion, the strictest and most inviolable neutrality.

“Such being his conduct towards France, he had a right to expect on their part a suitable return; more especially as this return had been expressly conditioned for by a compact, into which they entered, and by which they engaged to respect the rights of his Majesty and his allies, not to interfere in the government of any neutral country, and not to pursue any system of aggrandizement, or make any addition to their do-

minions, but to confine themselves, at the conclusion of the war, within their own territories. These conditions they had all grossly violated, and had adopted a system of ambitious and destructive policy, fatal to the peace and security of every government, and which in its consequences had shaken Europe itself to its foundation. Their decree of the 19th of November, which had been so much talked of, offering fraternity and affiance to all people who wish to recover their liberty, was a decree, not levelled against particular nations, but against every country where there was any form of government established; a decree not hostile to individuals but to the human race; which was calculated every where to sow the seeds of rebellion and civil and contention, and to spread war from one end of Europe to the other. While they were bound to this country by the engagements which he had mentioned, they had shewed no intention to exempt it from the consequences of this decree. Nay, a directly contrary opinion might be formed, and it might be supposed that this country was more particularly aimed at by this very decree, if we were to judge from the exultation with which they had received from different societies in England every address expressive of sedition and disloyalty, and from the eager desire which they had testified to encourage and cherish the growth of such sentiments. Not only had they shewed no inclination to fulfil their engagements, but had even put it out of their own power, by taking the first opportunity to make additions to their territory in contradiction to their own express stipulations. By express resolutions for the destruction of the existing governments of all invaded countries, by the

means of Jacobin societies, by orders given to their generals, by the whole system adopted in this respect by the national assembly, and by the actual connection of the whole country of Savoy, they had marked their determination to add to the dominions of France, and to provide means, through the medium of every new conquest, to carry their principles over Europe. Their conduct was such, as in every instance had militated against the dearest and most valuable interests of this country.

“The next consideration was, that under all the provocations which had been sustained from France, provocations which, in ordinary times, and in different circumstances, could not have failed to have been regarded as acts of hostility, and which formerly, not even a delay of twenty-four hours would have been wanting to have been treated as such, by commencing an immediate war of retaliation, his Majesty's ministers had prudently and temperately advised all the means to be previously employed of obtaining reasonable satisfaction, before recourse should be had to extremities. Means had been taken to inform their agents, even though not accredited, of the grounds of jealousy and complaint on the part of this country, and an opportunity had been offered through them of bringing forward any circumstances of explanation, or offering any terms of satisfaction. Whether the facts and explanations which these agents had brought forward were such as contained any proper satisfaction for the past, or could afford any reasonable assurance with respect to the future, every member might judge from the inspection of the papers. He had already given it as his opinion, that if there was no other al-

ternative than either to make war or depart from our principles, rather than recede from our principles, a war was preferable to a peace; because a peace purchased upon such terms, must be uncertain, precarious, and liable to be continually interrupted by the repetition of fresh injuries and insults. War was preferable to such a peace, because it was a shorter and a surer war to that end which the house had undoubtedly in view as its ultimate object—a secure and lasting peace. What sort of peace must that be in which there was no security? Peace he regarded as desirable only so far as it was secure. If, said Mr. Pitt, you entertain a sense of the many blessings which you enjoy, if you value the continuance and safety of that commerce which is a source of so much opulence, if you wish to preserve and render permanent that high state of prosperity, by which this country has for some years past been so eminently distinguished, you hazard all these advantages more, and are more likely to forfeit them, by submitting to a precarious and disgraceful peace, than by a timely and vigorous interposition of your arms.—By tameness and delay you suffer that evil which might now be checked, to gain ground, and which, when it becomes indispensable to oppose, may perhaps be found irresistible,

“It had on former debates been alleged, that by going to war we expose our commerce. Is there, he would ask, any man so blind and irrational, who does not know that the inevitable consequence of every war must be an interruption and injury to commerce? But because our commerce was exposed to suffer was that a reason why we should never go to war? Was there no combination of circumstances, was there no situa-

tion in the affairs of Europe, such as to render it expedient to hazard for a time, a part of our commercial interests? Was there no evil greater, and which a war might be necessary to avoid, than the partial inconvenience to which our commerce was subjected, during the continuance of hostile operations? But he begged pardon of the house for the digression into which he had been led—while he talked as if they were debating about the expediency of a war, war was actually declared: we were at this moment engaged in a war.

“ He now came to state what had occurred since his Majesty’s last message; and to notice those grounds which had served as a pretext for the declaration of war. When his Majesty had dismissed M. Chauvelin, what were then the hopes of peace? He was by no means sanguine in such hopes, and he had stated to the house that he then saw but little probability that a war could be avoided. Such then was his sentiment, because the explanations and conduct of the French agent were such as afforded him but little room to expect any terms which this country could, either consistently with honour, or a regard to its safety, accept. Still, however, the last moment had been kept open to receive any satisfactory explanation which might be offered. But what it might be asked, was to be the mode of receiving such explanation? When his Majesty had dismissed M. Chauvelin, as, by the melancholy catastrophe of the French monarch, the only character in which he had ever been acknowledged at the British court had entirely ceased, eight days had been allowed him for his departure, and if during that period he had sent any more satisfactory explanation, still it would have been received. Had any disposi-

tion been testified to comply with the requisitions of Lord Grenville, still an opportunity was afforded of intimating this disposition. Thus had our government pursued to the last a conciliatory system, and left every opening for accommodation, had the French been disposed to embrace it. M. Chauvelin, however, instantly quitted the country, without making any proposition. Another agent had succeeded; (M. Marat) who, on his arrival in this country, had notified himself as the charge-d'affaires on the part of the French Republic, but had never, during his residence in the kingdom, afforded the smallest communication,

“ What was the next event that had succeeded? An embargo was laid on all the vessels and persons of his Majesty's subjects who were then in France. This embargo was to be considered as not only a symptom, but as an act of hostility. It certainly had taken place without any notice being given, contrary to treaty and against all the laws of nations. Here, perhaps, it might be said, that on account of their, stopping certain ships loaded with corn for France, the government of Great Britain might be under the same charge; to this point he should come presently. He believed if government were chargeable with any thing, it might rather be, that they were even too slow in their asserting the honour and vindicating the rights of this country. If he thought that his Majesty's ministers wanted any justification, it would be for their forbearance and not for their promptitude, since to the last moment they had testified a disposition to receive terms of accommodation, and left open the means of explanation. Notwithstanding this violent and outrageous act, such was the disposition to peace in his Majesty's ministers,

that the channels of communication, even after this period, were not shut: a most singular circumstance happened, which was the arrival of intelligence from his Majesty's minister at the Hague, on the very day when the embargo became known here, that he had received an intimation from General Dumourier that the general wished an interview, in order to see if it were yet possible to adjust the differences between the two countries, and to promote a general pacification. Instead of treating the embargo as an act of hostility, and forbearing from any communication, even after this aggression, his Majesty's ministers, on the same day on which the embargo was made known to them, gave instructions to the ambassador at the Hague to enter into a communication with General Dumourier; and they did this work with great satisfaction on several accounts; first, because it might be done without committing the king's dignity; for the general of an army might, even in the very midst of war, without any recognition of his authority, open any negotiation for peace. But this sort of communication was desirable also, because, if successful, it would be attended with the most immediate effects, as its tendency was immediately to stop the progress of war, in the most practicable, and perhaps the only practical way. No time was therefore lost in authorising the king's minister at the Hague to proceed in the pursuit of so desirable an object, if it could be done in a safe and honourable mode, but not otherwise. But before the answer of government could reach the ambassador, or any means be adopted for carrying the object proposed into execution, war was declared, on the part of the French, against this country. If then we were to debate at all,

we were to debate whether or not we were to repel those principles, which not only were inimical to this and to every other government, but which had been followed up in acts of hostility to this country. We were to debate whether or not we were to resist an aggression which had already been commenced. He would however refer the house, not to observations of reasoning, but to the grounds which had been assigned by the assembly themselves in their declaration of war. But first he must revert again to the embargo. He then stated that a detention of ships, if no ground of hostility had been given, was, in the first place contrary to the law of nations. In the second place, there was an actual treaty between the two countries, providing for this very circumstance; and this treaty (if not set aside by our breach of it, which he should come to presently) expressly said, that, "in case of a rupture time shall be given for a removal of persons and effects."

"He should now proceed to the declaration itself. It began with declaring, 'That the king of England has not ceased, especially since the revolution of the 10th of August, 1792, to give proofs of his being evil-disposed towards the French nation and of his attachment to the coalition of crowned heads.' Notwithstanding the assertion that his Majesty had not ceased to shew his evil-dispositions towards the French nation, they had not attempted to shew any acts of hostility previous to the 10th of August; nor in support of the charge of his attachment to the coalition of crowned heads, had they been able to allege any fact, except his supposed accession to the treaty between the emperor of Germany and the king of Prussia. This treaty had

already, this evening, been the subject of conversation : it had then been mentioned, which he should now repeat, that the fact thus alleged, was false and entirely destitute of foundation ; and that no accession to any such treaty had ever taken place on the part of his Majesty. And not only had he entered into no such treaty, but no step had been taken, and no engagement formed on the part of our government to interfere in the internal affairs of France, or attempt to dictate to them any form of constitution. He declared that the whole of the interference of Great Britain had been (in consequence of French aggressions) with the general view of seeing whether it was possible, either by their own exertions, or in concert with any other powers to repress this French system of aggrandizement and aggression, with the view of seeing whether we could not re-establish the blessings of peace, whether we could not either separately, or jointly with other powers, provide for the security of our own country, and the general security of Europe.

“ The next charge brought by the National Assembly, was, ‘ That at the period aforesaid, he ordered his ambassador at Paris to withdraw, because he would not acknowledge the provisional executive council, created by the legislative assembly.’ It was hardly necessary for him to discuss a subject with which all were already so well acquainted. After the horrors of the 10th of August, which were paralleled, but not eclipsed by those of the second of September, and the suspension of the French monarch, to whom alone the ambassador had been sent, it certainly became proper to recal him. He could not remain to treat with any government to whom he was not accredit-

ed ; and the propriety of his being recalled would appear still more evident, when it was considered that the banditti who had seized upon the government would not long retain their power ; and, in fact, in the course of a month, they had been obliged to yield to the interest of a different party, but of a description similar to their own. It was also to be remarked, that this circumstance of recalling the ambassador had never till now been complained of as an act of hostility. When a government was overturned, it became a fair question how long an interval should intervene till that government should be acknowledged ? and especially if that change of government was accompanied with all the circumstances of tumult and distraction, it certainly became a matter of extreme hardship that a war should be the consequence to the nation which should refuse to acknowledge it in the first instance. The form of this reasoning, became increased in the particular application, when it was considered, that the French had not yet established any constitution of its own ; that all, hitherto, was merely provisional and temporary ; and that, however the present republican system might be confirmed by force, or change of opinion, a little before, the voice of the nation, as far as its wish could be collected, had expressed itself in favour of a monarchy.

“ He proceeded to state, as farther grounds of their declaration of war, ‘ That the cabinet of St. James’s has ceased, since the same period (10th of August) to correspond with the French ambassador at London on pretext of the suspension of the heretofore king of the French. That, since the opening of the national convention, it has refused to resume the usual corres-

pondence between the two states, and to acknowledge the powers of this convention. That it has refused to acknowledge the ambassador of the French Republic, although provided with letters of credit in its name.' M. Chauvelin had been received at this court, as ambassador of the king, and in no other capacity and character. From the period of the suspension of the king, he, for some months, ceased to hold any communication with the government here; or to act in any capacity; nor was it till the month of December, that he had received his letter of credence to act here as the ambassador of the French Republic. With respect to the charge of not having acknowledged the convention, he confessed it to be true. When these letters of credence had been tendered, they were refused; but it was to be considered, whether it would have been proper to have recognized them, after the repeated instances of offence for which no compensation had been made, and of which, indeed every fresh act presented not only a repetition, but an aggravation. Indeed, it would have been impossible at that period, without shewing a deviation from principle, and a tameness of disposition, to have recognized their authority, or accepted of the person who presented himself in the character of their ambassador. At that very moment, it was to be recollected, they were embarked in the unjust and inhuman process which had terminated in the murder of their king—an event which had every where excited sentiments of the utmost horror and indignation! Would it have been becoming in our government first to have acknowledged them at such a moment, when the power they had assumed was thus cruelly and unjustly exercised against that very au;

thority they had usurped ? But, whatever might be the feelings of abhorrence and indignation, which their conduct on this occasion could not fail to excite, he should by no means hold out those feelings as a ground for hostility, nor should he ever wish to propose a war of vengeance. The catastrophe of the French monarch they ought all to feel deeply ; and consistently with that impression, be led more firmly to resist those principles from which an event of so black and atrocious a nature had proceeded ; principles, if not opposed, might be expected in their progress to lead to the commission of similar crimes ; but, notwithstanding the government had been obliged to decline all communication which tended to acknowledge the authority of the convention, still, as he had said before, they had left open the means of accommodation ; nor could that line of conduct which they had pursued be stated as affording any ground of hostility.

“ He should now consider collectively, some of the subsequent grounds which they had stated in their declaration, which were expressed in the following articles :—

‘ That the Court of St. James’s has attempted to impede the different purchasers of corn, arms, and other commodities ordered in England, either by French citizens or the agents of the republic.

‘ That it has caused to be stopped, several boats and ships loaded with grain for France, contrary to the treaty of 1786, while exportation to other foreign countries was free.

‘ That in order still more effectually to obstruct the commercial operations of the republic in England, it

obtained an act of parliament prohibiting the circulation of assignats.

‘ That in violation of the fourth article of the treaty of 1786, it obtained another act, in the month of January last, which subjects all French citizens, residing in, or coming into England to forms the most inquisitorial, vexatious, and dangerous.

‘ That at the same time, and contrary to the first article of the peace of 1783, it granted protection and pecuniary aid not only to the emigrants, but even to the chiefs of the rebels, who have already fought against France ; and it has maintained with them a daily correspondence, evidently directed against the French revolution : that it has also received the chiefs of the rebels of the French West India Colonies.’

“ All these had been stated as provocations ; but what sort of provocations ? What, he would ask, was a provocation ?—That we had indeed, taken measures, which, if considered by themselves, and not as connected with the situation of affairs in which they were adopted, might perhaps be considered in the light of provocations, he would allow ; but if these measures were justified by the necessity of circumstances—if they were called for by a regard to our own safety, and interests—they could only be viewed as temperate and moderate precautions. And in this light, these grounds, assigned in the declaration could only be regarded as frivolous and unfounded pretences. With respect to the charge of having stopped supplies of grain and other commodities, intended for France, what could be more ridiculous than such a pretext ? When there was reason to apprehend that France intended an attack upon the allies of this country, and

against the country itself, upon which, at the same time, it depended for the stores and ammunitions necessary for carrying on hostilities, was it natural to suppose that they should furnish, from their own bosom, supplies to be turned against themselves and their allies? Could they be such children in understanding, could they be such traitors in principle, as to furnish to the enemy the means of hostility, and the instruments of offence? What was the situation of France with respect to this country? Had they not given sufficient cause for jealousy of their hostile intentions? By their decree of the 19th of November, they had declared war against all governments. They had possessed themselves of Flanders, and were there endeavouring to establish by force, what they styled a system of freedom, while they actually menaced Holland with an invasion. Another ground which they had stated in their declaration, as an act of hostility on the part of our government was, that they had not suffered assignats to be circulated in this country. Truly, they had no reason to be offended that we would not receive what was worth nothing; and that by exercising an act which came completely within our own sovereignty with respect to the circulation of any foreign paper currency, we thus avoided a gigantic system of swindling! If such, indeed, were the pretences which they brought forward as grounds for a declaration of war, it was matter of wonder that, instead of a sheet of paper, they did not occupy a volume, and proved that their ingenuity had been exhausted before their modesty had been at all affected. Of much the same nature was that other pretext, with respect to the passing of the Alien Bill; a bill absolutely necessary for the

safety of the country, as it shielded us from the artifice of the seditious, perhaps from the dagger of the assassin. This bill they held out as an infringement of the treaty of commerce. It could be no infringement of their treaty, as in the treaty itself it was expressly declared, that nothing was to be considered as an infringement, unless, first, proper explanations had taken place. Secondly, it was not to be expected that any treaty could supersede the propriety of adopting new measures in a new situation of affairs. Such was the case, when an inundation of foreigners had poured into this country, under circumstances entirely different from those which were provided for by the bill. But who were those who complained of the severity of the regulations adopted by the Alien Bill in this country? The very persons, who, during the late transactions in their own country, had adopted restrictions of police ten times more severe, but of which our government, however much its subjects might be affected, had never made the smallest complaint.

“The next ground assigned in the declaration, was the armament which had taken place in this country.

‘That, in the same spirit, without any provocation, and when all the maritime powers are at peace with England, the cabinet of St. James’s has ordered a considerable naval armament, and an augmentation of the land forces.

‘That this armament was ordered at a moment when the English minister was bitterly persecuting those who supported the principles of the French revolution in England, and was employing all possible means, both in parliament and out of it, to cover the

the French Republic with ignominy, and to draw upon it the execration of the English nation, and of all Europe.'

“ And under what circumstances had the armament complained of taken place? At the period when the French, by their conduct with regard to the treaty of the Scheldt, shewed their intention to disregard the obligation of all treaties, when they had begun to propagate principles of universal war, and to discover views of unbounded conquest, was it to be wondered, that, at such a time, we should think it necessary to take measures of precaution, and to oppose with determination, the progress of principles, not only of so mischievous a tendency, but which, in their immediate consequences, threatened to be so fatal to ourselves and our allies? Indeed they now seemed rather to despair of these principles being so generally adopted and attended with such striking and immediate success as they had at first fondly imagined. How little progress these principles had made in this country, they might be sufficiently convinced by that spirit, which had displayed itself, of attachment to the constitution, and those expressions of a firm determination to support it, which had appeared from every quarter. If, indeed, they mean to attack us, because we do not like French principles, then would this indeed be that sort of war which had so often been alleged on the other side of the house—a war against opinions. If they mean to attack us because we love our constitution, then indeed it would be a war of extirpation; for not till the spirit of Englishmen was exterminated, would their attachment to their constitution be de-

troyed, and their generous efforts be slackened in its defence.

“The next articles of complaint, on the part of the French, were,

‘That the object of this armament, intended against France, was not even disguised in the English parliament.

‘That although the provisional executive council of France employed every measure for preserving peace and fraternity with the English nation, and has replied to calumnies and violation of treaties only by remonstrances, founded on the principles of justice, and expressed with the dignity of free men; the English minister has persevered in his system of malevolence and hostility, continued the armaments, and sent a squadron to the Scheldt to disturb the operations of the French in Belgium.

‘That on the news of the execution of Louis, he carried his outrages to the French Republic to such a length, as to order the ambassador of France to quit the British territory within eight days.

‘That the king of England has manifested his attachment to the cause of that traitor, and his design of supporting it by different hostile resolutions adopted in his council, both by nominating generals of his land army, and by applying to parliament for a considerable addition of land and sea forces, and putting ships of war in commission.’

“They clearly shewed their enmity to that constitution, by taking every opportunity to separate the king of England from the nation, and by addressing the people as distinct from the government. Upon the point of their fraternity he did not wish to say much: he had

no desire for their affection. To the people they offered fraternity, while they would rob them of that situation by which they are protected and deprive them of the numerous blessings which they enjoy under its influence. In this case, their fraternal embraces resembled those certain animals who embrace only to destroy.

“Another ground which they assigned was the grief, which had been expressed in the British court at the fate of their unhappy monarch. Of all the reasons he ever heard for making war against another country, that of the French upon this occasion was the most extraordinary: they said they would make war on us, first, because we loved our own constitution; secondly, because we detested their proceedings; and lastly, because we presumed to grieve at the death of their murdered king. Thus would they even destroy those principles of justice, and those sentiments of compassion, which led us to reprobate their crimes and be afflicted at their cruelties. Thus would they deprive us of that last resource of humanity—to mourn over the misfortunes and sufferings of the victims of their injustice. If such was the case, it might be asked in the emphatic words of the Roman writer,

Quis gemitus populo Romano liber erit?

They would not only endeavour to destroy our political existence and to deprive us of the privileges which we enjoyed under our excellent constitution, but they would eradicate our feelings as men; they would make crimes of those sympathies which were excited by the distresses of our common nature; they would repress our sighs and restrain our tears. Thus, except the

specific fact, which was alleged as a ground of their declaration of war, namely, the accession of his Majesty to the treaty between Austria and Prussia, which had turned out to be entirely false and unfounded, or the augmentation of our armament, a measure of precaution indispensibly requisite for the safety of the country, and the protection of its allies, all the others were merely unjust, unfounded, absurd, and frivolous pretexts—pretexts which never could have been brought to justify a measure of which they were not previously strongly desirous, and which shewed that instead of waiting for procrastination, they only sought a pretence of aggression. The death of Louis, though it only affected the individual, was aimed against all sovereignty, and shewed their determination to carry into execution that intention, which they had so often professed of exterminating all monarchy, as a consequence of that monstrous system of inconsistency which they pursued, even while they professed a desire to maintain a good understanding with this country, the minister of marine had written a letter to the seaport towns, ordering them to fit out privateers: for what purpose but the projected view of making depredations on our commerce? While they affected to complain of our armament, they had passed a decree to fit out fifty sail of the line—an armament which, however it was to be observed, existed only in the decree.

“ He feared that, by this long detail, he had wearied the patience of the house, and occupied more of their time than he at first intended. The pretexts which he had been led to examine, alleged as grounds for the declaration of war, were of a nature that required no re-

futation; they were such as every man could see through; and in many of his remarks he doubted not he had been anticipated by that contempt with which the house would naturally regard the weak reasoning, but wicked policy, of these pretexts."

He now came to his conclusion.—"We," said Mr. Pitt, "have, in every instance, observed the strictest neutrality with respect to the French: we have pushed to its utmost extent, the system of temperance and moderation: we have held out the means of accommodation; waited till the last moment for satisfactory explanation. They have now, at last, come to an actual aggression, by seizing our vessels in our very ports, without any provocation being given on our part; without any preparations having been adopted but those of necessary precaution, they have declared, and are now waging war. Such is the conduct which they have pursued; such is the situation in which we stand. It now remains to be seen whether, under Providence, the efforts of a free, brave, loyal, and happy people, aided by their allies, will not be successful in checking the progress of a system, the principles of which, if not opposed, threaten the most fatal consequences to the tranquillity of this country, the security of its allies, the good order of every European government, and the happiness of the whole of the human race!"

Mr. Pitt then proceeded to move the following address in answer to his Majesty's message:—

"That an humble address be presented to his Majesty, to return his Majesty the thanks of this house for his most gracious message, informing us, that the assembly, now exercising the powers of government in

France, have, without previous notice, directed acts of hostility to be committed against the persons and property of his Majesty's subjects, in breach of the law of nations and of the positive stipulations of treaty; and have since, on the most groundless pretences, actually declared war against his Majesty and the United Provinces: to assure his Majesty that, under the circumstances of this wanton and unprovoked aggression, we most gratefully acknowledge his Majesty's care and vigilance in taking the necessary steps for maintaining the honour of his crown, and vindicating the rights of his people; that his Majesty may rely on the firm and effectual support of the representatives of a brave and loyal people, in the prosecution of a just and necessary war, and in endeavoring, under the blessing of Providence, to oppose an effectual barrier to the farther progress of a system which strikes at the security and peace of all independant nations, and is pursued in open defiance of every principle of moderation, good faith, humanity, and justice.

“ That, in a cause of such general concern, it must afford us great satisfaction to learn that his Majesty has every reason to hope for the cordial co-operation of those powers who are united with his Majesty by the ties of alliance, or who feel an interest in preventing the extension of anarchy and confusion, and in contributing to the security and tranquillity of Europe.

“ That we are persuaded, that whatever his Majesty's faithful subjects must consider as most dear and sacred, the stability of our happy constitution, the security and honour of his Majesty's crown, and the preservation of our laws, our liberty, and our religion,

are all involved in the issue of the present contest ; and that our zeal and exertions shall be proportioned to the importance of the conjuncture, and to the magnitude and value of the objects for which we have to contend."

The effects of the French revolution were naturally not diminished by the war which Great Britain, from such cogent motives had now waged with undiminished dignity against the French republic. It had indeed, with the usual tendency of all wars, served to excite against the minister, in those who supported the doctrines of the present party in opposition to government, additional opprobrium ; and when the measures which had birth in his ardent mind began to operate with the additional force which they might be expected to derive from their execution, the consequence was little less than a general insurrection, which the utmost strength of the loyal could scarcely quell in the body of the people.

Of the measures which took place on this most important and interesting occasion, Mr. Pitt had the decided merit. Whatever assistance he received from those respectable coadjutors who appeared as the ostensible authors of the various plans with which it became necessary to meet the machinations of the popular party, the principle on which the government of Britain was conducted under the pressure of the present circumstances was that of Mr. Pitt, and entirely attributable to him.

This principle was, as usual, perfectly accordant with those under which he had come into administration, and diametrically opposite to that of his predecessors—his rivals, and present opponents.

A view of their respective merits has been already published in such a variety of forms, as in this instance to be in no way necessary. Of that of Mr. Pitt sufficient will be learned from his own mouth on the report of the committee on the subject, which took place on May 16, 1794—at a time when the ferment of the nation had arrived at its greatest height.

This committee had been appointed four days preceding, in consequence of a message from his Majesty, stating, “ that seditious practices to an alarming extent had been carried on by certain societies in London, in correspondence, &c. tending to subvert the laws and constitution of the kingdom, &c. and recommending to the house to adopt such measures as might appear necessary.”

The books and papers of the society were referred to a committee of secrecy, of which this was the result.

Mr. Pitt followed the reading of the report.

He said, “ the committee of secrecy had formed their opinion on the papers submitted to their examination with the greatest expedition, and their report stated so fully and particularly those circumstances, which in the judgment of the committee required the immediate attention of parliament, that he felt it hardly necessary for him to do more than shortly to recapitulate the different objects to which that report applied, and the various particulars which came under their consideration. Gentlemen would perceive that that report, so expeditiously laid before the house, contained a general view of the transactions referred to the committee, without waiting for a more minute investigation, and was shortly this:—that it appeared

to them, that a plan had been digested and acted upon, and at that moment was in forwardness towards its execution, the object of which was nothing less than to assemble a pretended convention of the people, for the purpose of assuming to itself the character of a general representation of the nation; superseding, in the first place, the representative capacity of that house, and arrogating, in the next place, the legislative power of the country at large. It would be for the house to consider whether the circumstances contained in the report, impressed their minds with the same conviction with which they had impressed the minds of the committee. If they did, he could not have a doubt but that they would lead to the same practical conclusion, namely, that, if such designs existed, if such designs had been acted upon, and were in forwardness, there was not one moment to be lost in arming the executive power with those additional means, which might be sufficient effectually to stop the further progress of such a plan, and to prevent its being carried into final execution.

“ It was chiefly necessary for the house, in considering the report, to recollect, that a great part of it was merely introductory; and that, though it stated transactions of a date long antecedent to the period in which the acts of the societies implicated had assumed the serious aspect of practical treason, and though they were of notorious publicity, it was nevertheless necessary to bring them forward again to observation, to give a clue to unravel the complicated circumstances of the plan, and, by comparison and combination of them with the subsequent proceedings of the individuals concerned, to shew, that from the begin-

ning their views were the same, and that the pretext of reform, under which they masked their purpose, was far from being the true object of their intention. The house would also carry along with them, that the committee, having been stinted in point of time, had not been able to digest methodically, or point out distinctly, the various minute parts that formed the great and momentous business before them. In order to give the house, however, as soon as possible, possession of so much of it as might serve to point out the daily and encreasing approximation of danger, the committee, in examining and making up the report, had kept in view the great object, the leading design of the plan; for it was not to be imagined, that the distance of the transactions in point of time, and the fact of being previously known, made them the less material as comments on those parts of their conduct which were discovered in their full maturity.

“ It would be seen by the report, that the papers found, as far as related to that part of the conspiracy which immediately implicated the corresponding society, and that for constitutional information, contained two years’ correspondence with various other societies in this and a neighbouring country; and from these, coupled with their subsequent and more recent proceedings, it was evident that those societies, which would be found to be now setting on foot a convention, had had such a measure in contemplation from the very outset; that it was conceived so long as two years back; was openly avowed in their correspondence, but kept in reserve to be reduced to practice as soon as a seasonable occasion should offer. This whole system of insurrection would appear, from the

papers found with them, to be laid in the modern doctrine of the rights of man;—that monstrous doctrine, under which the weak and ignorant, who are most susceptible of impression from such barren abstract positions, were attempted to be seduced to overturn government, law, property, security, religion, order, and every thing valuable in this country, as men acting upon the same ideas had already overturned and destroyed every thing in France, and disturbed the peace and endangered the safety, if not the existence of every nation in Europe. However gentlemen might ground arguments against the cautionary measures taken to prevent the evil effects of that pernicious doctrine, on the contemptible situation of the authors, and the absurdity of the principles of those books in which it was inculcated, yet allowing the one to be in the extreme as contemptible as the others were absurd, it was no light or trivial circumstance, when, deduced from it, alarming principles were promulgated and eagerly adopted by large bodies; and when the proceedings of all those jacobin societies would appear (as the papers before the house fully demonstrated) to be only comments on that text;—a text for the inculcation of which those societies were the disciples here, as their corresponding French brethren were the instruments for disseminating it in France, and extending it by carnage and slaughter to all other parts of Europe.

“ It would appear, that, prior to the enormities committed in France, a correspondence had been carried on between those societies and the jacobin club in Paris, and that delegates were sent from them to the national convention, and received formally by

that assembly; and that, at the very moment when the jacobin faction which usurped the government of that country, had commenced hostilities against Great Britain, those societies, still, as far as they could, had pursued the same conduct, expressed the same attachment to their cause, adapted their appellations, forms of proceeding and language, and, in short, had formed a settled design to disseminate the same principles, and sow the same seeds of ruin, in their own country. It would be found, not only that the most effectual plans which cunning could devise, had been laid to carry this design into practice, but in the report would be seen a statement of the catalogue of manufacturing towns marked out, as the most likely (from the vast concourse of ignorant and profligate men who necessarily collect in such places) to adopt their plans and corresponding societies established there, to keep up the chain of seditious intercourse, and promulgate and give it universal circulation. Gentlemen would find in that catalogue a well chosen selection of the places where those people dwell, who must be naturally supposed most ready to rise at the call of insurrection; who were most likely to be blinded by their artifices, and prejudiced by professions; whose understandings were most subject to be misled by their doctrines, and rendered subservient to their views, and whom fraudulent persuasion, proneness to discontent, and the visionary and fallacious hope of mending their condition by any alteration of it whatever, would be most likely to congregate into an enormous torrent of insurrection, which would sweep away all the barriers of government, law, and religion, and leave our

country a naked waste for usurped authority to range in, uncontrolled and unresisted.

“ In considering this subject, the house could not but remark the extraordinary manner in which those societies had varied their plans of operation ; sometimes acting in undisguised, audacious hostility, sometimes putting on the mask of attachment to the state and country ; one day openly avowing their intentions, as if purposely to provoke the hand of justice ; the next putting on the mask of reform, and affecting the utmost zeal for the preservation of the constitution. In their letter to the society at Norwich, would be seen a plain avowal of their object, *an apology for deigning to apply to parliament* ; and a candid, sincere confession, that, not to the Parliament, not to the executive power, were they to look for redress, but to the convention which they proposed to erect, and to themselves ; afterwards they recommended persevering in petitioning for reform to be used as a mask to their designs, which they were to throw off when time served, and a period propitious to their views should arrive. Happily for this country, and for the whole world, they had prematurely thought that period at hand, and thrown off the mask just when the bulk of the nation unanimously were uniting with government in vigilance and care for its protection, and in the resolution to oppose their efforts.

“ By a due attention to the correspondence of that society, the house would find, in their communication with the British constitution at Edinburgh, which still retained some flimsy remnant of that disguise, some remains of that hypocrisy assumed to hide those designs, which, though not publicly declared, too ob-

viously appeared, that they styled this convention the representatives of the people, clothed in all the right to reform, and send delegates to it; and when some of the most mischievous and active of its members fell under the sentence of the law, that they boldly asserted their innocence, nay, their merits, directly in the teeth of that law, paid every tribute of enthusiastic applause to the persons convicted by the verdict of juries legally constituted, and of respect to the convention, pronouncing them objects of panegyric and envy. In conformity to their prior declarations, and to the plans of insurrection laid by them, they made the legal condemnation of those guilty persons the signal, as they styled it, of *coming to issue* on the point, 'Whether the law should frighten them into compliance, or they oppose it with their own weapons, to wit, force and power?' that is to say distinctly, Whether they should yield obedience to the laws of their country, or oppose them by insurrection? That was avowed in as plain and marked language as man could possibly conceive. He thought that that case, so circumstanced, and supported by such a variety of coincident matter, was as strong a case as the mind of man could well imagine; yet, singular though it might appear, all this was but introductory to facts of a still stronger nature which were to follow. He should call the attention of the house to the history of a society which, despicable and contemptible though the persons were, as to talents, education, and influence, yet when looked at with cautious attention, and compared with the object they had in view, and the motives on which they acted, namely, that great moving principle of all jacobinism, the love of plunder, devastation,

and robbery, which now bore the usurped name of liberty, and that butchery and carnage which had been made the instrument of enforcing those principles, would appear to be formidable in exact proportion to the meanness and contemptibility of their characters. Of that society the characteristic was, that, being composed of the lower orders of the people, it had within it the means of unbounded extension, and concealed in itself the means of rapid increase. It had risen already to no less than thirty divisions in London, some of those containing as many as six hundred persons, and was connected by a systematical chain of correspondence with other societies scattered through all the manufacturing towns, where the seeds of those principles were laid, which artful and dangerous people might best convert to their own purposes. It would appear in proof, that the society had risen to an enormous height of boldness, and erected in itself, in express terms, a power to watch over the progress of parliament, to scan its proceedings, and prescribe limits for its actions; beyond which if it presumed to advance, that august society was to issue its mandate, not only to controvert that act, but to put an end to the existence of parliament itself: so that if the parliament should think it necessary to oppose, by any act of penal coercion, the ruin of the constitution, that would be the war-whoop for insurrection; the means of our defence would become the signal for attack, and the parliament would be made the instrument of its own annihilation. Such language as this, coming from people apparently so contemptible in talents, so mean in their description, and so circumscribed in their power, would, abstractedly considered,

be supposed to derive compassion, as the wildest workings of insanity; but the researches of the committee would tend to prove, that it had been the result of deep design, matured, moulded into shape, and fit for mischievous effect when opportunity should offer.

About six weeks since there had arisen a new æra in this history of insurrection, in which the house might contemplate those great machines of jacobinism, the societies alluded to in the report. At that period the corresponding society had laid, in due form, before the society for constitutional information, a deliberate and well concerted plan for actually assembling a convention for all England; not to be the representatives of these particular bodies for the accomplishment of particular legal purposes, but to be the representatives of the whole body of the people of England, and evidently to exercise legislative and judicial capacities, to overturn the established system of government, and wrest from the parliament that power which the people and the constitution had lodged in their hands. Within a few weeks the plan was fixed upon to be carried into execution, and in their circular letter they precisely and emphatically stated, that *no time was to be lost*: and lest, by any possibility, their ruinous intentions should be misunderstood, the letter was addressed equally to all parts of the island, and circulated with a share of vigour, cunning, and address, truly astonishing. It contained also a declaration, that a central spot was fixed upon, which they would not venture to name, till they had assurances of the fidelity of those to whom they were to disclose it; which central spot they chose, as they themselves asserted, for the purpose of having with greater facility the

delegates of the whole island present when they assembled; and they particularly desired each separate society to send an exact account of the number of its members, friends, and adherents, in order to estimate their force. Of this they informed the society for constitutional information, in a letter, accompanied with a set of resolutions.

“It might be objected, that men of the description he had stated, could not be expected to act so consistently, and under such well managed disguise; but when, on inspection, it appeared that their plans had been carried on with a degree of cunning and management that greater men, in worthier causes, had failed in manifesting, that objection could have no weight when opposed to evidence thus incontrovertible. Who was there that knew what jacobins, and jacobin principles were, but must see, in the pretences of reform in parliament held out by these societies, the arrogant claims of the same class of men as those who lorded in France, to trample upon the rich, and crush every description of men, women, and children; the dark designs of a few, making use of the name of the people to govern all; a plan—a plan founded in the arrogance of wretches, the outcasts of society, tending to enrich themselves, by depriving of property and of life all those who were distinguished either for personal worth or for opulence!—a plan which had been long felt by the unfortunate people of France in all its aggravated horrors, and which, he feared, would long, very long continue to be felt by that ill-fated country.

“From the period he had mentioned, they had acted upon that horrible plan; and subsequently, (on the 14th of April,) the house would find a meeting of the

society, their proceedings in which meeting carried with them no faint illustration of what they might be expected to do in the full majesty of power. These would be found resolutions arraigning every branch of the government, threatening the sovereign, insulting the House of Peers, and accusing the Commons of insufficiency; there would be found notice taken of the measures of parliament, which had been previously made the signal for the insurrection of the people, and declarations that certain measures, if adopted, whether with or without the consent of parliament, should be rescinded, under their doctrine,

“*Salus populi suprema lex,*”

and that the constitution had been utterly destroyed. Could there be a more explicit avowal of their views? All the materials from whence proof of these allegations was drawn, rested on their own authentic records, and on the express and unequivocal avowal of their own deliberate acts in their meditated system of insurrection. This was the essence of the subject; but if the house were of opinion that this so deeply affected the safety and existence of parliament itself, and struck at the root of government and the constitution, as to demand interference, there were, in addition, other things, which must contribute not a little to increase the impatience of the house to baffle the views of those conspirators, and stop the final execution of their projects.

“For his part, Mr. Pitt said, such was his opinion of the British constitution, that, even supposing that the executive government had been guilty of every neglect of their duty in watching over its safety, and parliament had been supine under those manifestations of

sedition, he conceived its enemies must nevertheless have failed of success; but however persuaded he might be of this fact, it was still right to prevent, by timely interference, the small misery which a short struggle might necessarily produce, and to save the nation at large from the reproach, that they had seen such acts, and heard such avowals, without having adopted proper steps to check their execution, and punish those who were so wicked as to devise them. There were stated in the close of the report, on grounds not light and trivial, though not minutely entered into in the report till after fuller investigations by the committee, allegations *that arms had been actually procured and distributed by these societies*, and were in the hands of those very people whom they had been striving to corrupt; and that even now, instead of breaking up this formidable league, and disbanding and dispersing this jacobin army, they had shewn themselves immoveably bent on the pursuit of their purpose, and displayed preparations of defiance and resistance to the measures of government.

“ It remained for the house to consider what was to be done; and, in considering that, they would not refer to the quality of the persons, but to the nature and magnitude of the objects they had in view. It would be found, when the causes and proceedings were taken into contemplation, that so formidable a conspiracy had never before existed. The inquiry was yet far from complete, and unfit for final decision, the documents being very voluminous; but the committee had deemed it their duty to shew the house, that instant precaution was necessary, and had therefore, though unable to finish the important research, laid

before the house what they had yet done, which he hoped would be thought sufficient grounds for adopting the measure he intended to propose. It had been usual, in time of danger, to enact a temporary suspension of the *Habcas Corpus* law. As that great and essential benefit of the subject had been suggested, and provided for the preservation of the constitution on the one hand, so, on the other, it could not exist if the constitution was gone. The temporary sacrifice of that law might be, on certain occasions, as necessary to the support of the constitution, as the maintenance of its principles was at all others. It had been suspended at a time when the constitution and liberty of the country were most peculiarly guarded and respected; and such a suspension was more particularly called for at this crisis, when attempts were made to disseminate, through the realm, principles and means of action that might endanger that constitution, for the preservation of which that law had been made, and which might produce more lamentable effects, and at last require a remedy greater in extent, and more dreadful, than the one now proposed. This was not his opinion alone, but the sentiments of all those respectable gentlemen of the committee who had investigated the matter. He should therefore move for leave to bring in a bill to empower his Majesty to secure and detain all such persons as should be suspected of conspiring against his person and government."

Of the conduct of this war, and the circumstances arising out of it, Mr. Pitt built his highest fame; it is not for these pages to hope to trace his various diffi-

culties or the means by which he regularly subverted them, with energies proportionate to their magnitude.

By a selection of some incidents, however, of certain authenticity we shall endeavour to convey an idea of the spirit of that government formed on a principle entirely his own, which produced such astonishing effects.

Of the promptitude and dexterity of the civil department the following instance will afford no uninteresting specimen, as it was whispered about among the circles of the day.

At that period of the French revolution when republican emissaries from the continent were busily engaged in this country, in endeavouring, by the only means in their power, persuasion, and bribery, to disseminate those principles of anarchy and horror which have rendered France an eternal beacon to civilized society—precisely at that time when so many of our countrymen were seduced by a fair phantom from that honest attachment to their king and constitution, by which they had been hitherto distinguished, and to which they have long since returned—a certain foreigner entered one of the most considerable banking houses in the metropolis, and taking from his pocket-book a large sum of money, amounting to between twelve and fourteen thousands, expressed a desire to open an account with the house alluded to. On being asked by the clerk to whom he addressed himself, what name he should place in the books, he requested that the sum should be entered under the letter A, and that all drafts subscribed by that letter should be duly honoured. In a few days he called with a similar sum, which, by his directions was entered under the letter B. The

clerk surprized at these proceedings, communicated them to the principal partner in the firm, Mr. D. by whom he was ordered, should the stranger again make his appearance, to acquaint him, that he might have an opportunity of observing him. Accordingly, in less than a week, the foreigner deposited a large sum under the letter C; Mr. D. took advantage of his third visit particularly to notice the features of the man; and soon after another call enabled him firmly to imprint them on his mind. Having consulted with some friends on the steps it would be prudent to take, it was deemed advisable by them that Mr. D. should wait on the premier, as they had little doubt that it was intended to apply this money to sinister and political services. The next morning Mr. D. went to Downing-street, but was informed that Mr. Pitt had not risen. It is well known that that great man used to avail himself of the quiet of his bed to revolve in his mind the important schemes of policy, which he was ever intent on framing for the benefit of his country; and that at those moments his servants had orders on no account to disturb him. Mr. D. waited patiently above two hours before the minister's bell rang. On being told of his visitor, Mr. Pitt instantly sent a message requesting to see him in his chamber, where he received him in his morning gown, for which he apologized by expressing his unwillingness that he felt to allow a gentleman of such respectability to remain a single unnecessary instant in attendance on him. Mr. D. then proceeded to unfold the business on which he came. At the conclusion of the narrative, Mr. Pitt opened a small bureau, and taking from thence several miniature pictures, laid them before Mr. D. who strongly impressed

with the resemblance which one of them bore to the object of his suspicion, suddenly pointed to it, and exclaimed, "that is the man!" Mr. Pitt, smiling, thanked Mr. D. for his information, expressing a wish that all his brother bankers had been equally communicative; but at the same time he assured him that the proceedings of the individual, whose portrait he had selected, were well known to his Majesty's government, who were closely watching his movements, and those of his colleagues. He requested Mr. D. to return, take no notice of the transaction, and pay any drafts that might be presented in consequence. This Mr. D. accordingly did; the money was gradually withdrawn, and in a few months he learned that this man and his coadjutors, from the developement of whose intrigues, during an apparent blindness to them, government at that critical period had derived much important intelligence, were sent out of the kingdom under the Alien Act.

While these machinations from without were repelling with so much success, those of the societies already correctly described by Mr. Pitt were ardently pursuing within the bosom of the capital, and every means adopted to render the minister obnoxious to every class, though without effect.

One of these was of so particular a nature as to demand even here some rational investigation. This was the execution of the plan prescribed by Mr. Howard, and on a very extensive scale, of an house of correction, in Cold Bath Fields—a prison which excited the popular indignation perhaps more than any other circumstance within the remembrance of the present writer. He remembers while walking over the foundation of this



SIR FRANCIS BURDETT.

Est. Jan. 1800. By James Smith London.



building, to have heard the people considering the different portions of them as so many cells for the purposes of an English Bastile ! So jealous is a free nation of anything that wears the appearance of an abridgment of its liberties. Since the completion, however, of this house of correction, so various have been the reports concerning it, so dreadful have been the relation of its cruel regulations, that in justice to the sensations of wounded humanity, something that has relation to truth shall here be said of it. The commotions that took place in the capital shortly after its establishment, attached the idea of a state prison to it, as well as to many other places of confinement, both in town and in the country. The persons committed to it during those commotions were not such as philosophers would have appealed to for a calm and rational account of its internal economy. Hence what was before but conjecture respecting it, was established as fact by an irritated nation. But it did not end here; for during the representations of those whose sense of duty influenced them to examine into the state of this prison, Sir Francis Burdett* appeared to urge the inspection

* Of this amiable and conspicuous character, however in some instances misled, the impartiality of the present work demands some account to be given.

Sir Francis Burdett is the second son of Francis, also second son of Sir Robert Burdett, of Fremark in Derbyshire, and Eleanor, daughter of William Jones, Esq. of Ramsbury, in Wiltshire. In the pride of ancestry and fortune Sir Francis may boast the highest claims. A representative of his family, originally Norman, accompanied William the Conqueror to England, and the same female was the ancestor of the Earls of Sandwich and Stanhope, the De Salisés and the Burdetts. Sir Francis was educated at

with peculiar warmth. This sanction and the respectability it attached to the cause, while it inspired proper at-

Westminster School, with the late and present Dukes of Bedford, Lord William Russel, &c. About the year 1790 he repaired to the Continent; and, on his return to England, finding that his education had been neglected, he betook himself once more to the study of the classics; and it was upon this occasion, we believe, and also on this account, that he commenced an acquaintance with Mr. Horne Tooke, who had always been allowed to be one of the first scholars of the age. In 1793 he married Miss Coutts, a daughter of the opulent banker of the same name, and sister to the Marchioness of Bute, and countess dowager of Guildford: by this lady he has had two sons and two daughters. At the general election in 1796, Sir Francis was returned to parliament, without any opposition, for Boroughbridge, in Yorkshire, in conjunction with Sir John Scott, afterwards Lord Eldon. In 1797 he succeeded his grandfather, Sir Robert, in consequence of the unhappy catastrophe of his elder brother, who perished at the same time with a young English nobleman, (Viscount Montague), while trying to cross the falls of the Rhine, in a small boat, at Schaffhausen, an achievement novel in its kind, and which was not attempted with impunity.

Having evinced himself unfriendly to the late war, and hostile to all the measures of Mr. Pitt's administration, it was thought by many of the freeholders of Middlesex, that he was a proper person to represent that county. Mr. Mainwaring was at this time wholly unpopular, and as his conduct was deemed by many to be deserving of censure, it was upon this circumstance that the hope, and indeed the probability of success was chiefly placed. On the 3d of June, 1798, he delivered a speech in the house on the assessed taxes, which was considered by some as replete with sound reasoning. At all events, it displayed, in a very energetic manner, his inveterate opposition to the measures of that day. In the month of June following a bill was brought in for regulating the publication of newspapers, &c. which was opposed by the leading members of opposition as a dangerous innovation. This afforded Sir Francis an opportunity of standing forward as an advocate for the liberty

tention to the subjects, it is feared gave birth to evidence not altogether clear, and exaggerated stories that would not otherwise have existed. Those who had no other merit than the accident of a temporary confinement in Cold Bath Fields, knew that misfortune was a sure introduction to his excellent heart, and it is to be apprehended availed themselves accordingly. Thus was this prison, which might have been appropriated to the noblest ends, stamped with all the terrors of an inquisition—and thus was one of the best of men calumniated, for an attempt to ameliorate the condition of those who could not help themselves, and a regard for our character as a civilized nation.

Were we to attempt a description of the Cold Bath Fields prison, even from the narratives of those who have complained of its system (from which only we

of the press. But he first distinguished himself in opposition to the suspension of the habeas corpus bill in the House of Commons: he afterwards denounced Mr. Aris and the discipline of the prison in Cold Bath Fields, and it was this latter circumstance that finally led to his declaring himself a candidate for the representation of the county of Middlesex; and had it not been for some imprudent expressions, the new candidate would have been returned without opposition.

A variety of election contests, however, succeeded, which fall not within our plan, and the ultimate result of which was unsuccessful to the popular candidate.

The paternal fortune of Sir Francis was ample; and about eight years ago, on the death of Lady Jones, he came to the possession of a very large, unincumbered landed property in Wiltshire. In pursuance of the will of the testatrix, Sir Francis was obliged to take the name of Jones; but by passing through certain expensive legal ceremonies, he was enabled to resume his family name.

know anything of its internal plan) it would be considered as a defence of its obnoxious governor. To enter the lists on this behalf we have no inclination, yet we would advance a few ideas in the cause of truth.

When we perceive the dreadful situation to which all our institutions, whether learned or charitable, have indisputably degenerated, is it to be expected that those for the reception of persons whose misconduct has been supposed to exile them from society, should be infallible?—Certainly not; but let us then apply to comparison, as the best mode of estimation.

In the prisons of the metropolis, the few regulations that tend to prevent cruelty and disease, as in many other instances, entirely lose their effect from the superficial manner in which they are executed. The magistrates of the district make occasional inspections for the purpose, but these are to be made in form and a previous intimation prepares the object of it, for having *once* in several months, nothing to discommend. Nor are the views of those who inspect always directed to a very strict scrutiny. Hence are the numerous places of confinement in the capital scenes of misery, disease, and insubordinate vice; whence those who are committed but for a trifling misdemeanour—a debt of a few shillings—or an inconsiderate affray, seldom return uncontaminated, if not prepared for crimes. Here also unavoidably occur instances of oppression and inattention at which the feeling heart revolts, while filth, vermin, and abominable communications are the common evils that surround every prisoner.

From the very elevation of the building in Cold Bath Fields, these evils cannot take place to an extent by any means equal to the confined prisons of the cap-

capital and there is little doubt that if any of the unhappy persons against whom all the accumulated disagreeables of the "*Bastille*," have been combined, were left to the choice of a future confinement, they would return to the subjection of Governor Aris, in preference to Newgate, Clerkenwell, or Tothill Fields.

But the character of a state prison is ever obnoxious in a free nation; and the power of secluding any citizen unlimitedly, without charge or trial, is not only unpopular but unjust. Yet locality and accident appear to be the principal objections to this particular establishment, the complaints against which would perhaps be equally founded against any other prison in the world.

The next and most important attack upon the administration, was on the subject of granting money to the Emperor of Germany and the Prince of Condé, without the consent of parliament. A censure of ministers was the form assumed on the occasion. After Mr. Fox had introduced the motion, Mr. Pitt arose. He said, "when I consider, Sir, the nature of the motion that is this day brought forward by the right honorable gentleman against his Majesty's ministers, and the serious charge which it involves, I must regard myself as particularly implicated in that charge, as possessing a particular share of responsibility in the conduct of that measure which is censured as a violation of the constitution, and a breach of the privileges of this house. I have, however, in the discussion of this question, every thing to expect from the candour and justice of the house. An imputation of the most serious kind has been advanced against his Majesty's ministers; but it is necessary that all which may be

offered on both sides should be fairly heard, before any decision can take place. It is requisite that gentlemen should be in full possession of every important fact that can be adduced, before they hasten to a conclusion, which necessarily involves it in matter of such weight and magnitude. The house should clearly know the general principles on which it is to decide: it should know the grounds on which the theory of this part of the constitution is erected: it should also know what the particular instances are, in point of practice, that militate in a certain degree against the general principles: I say, Sir, when these considerations are once known, it will then be incumbent on the house to decide. But I trust it will not be denied, that until these points are completely and satisfactorily ascertained, the house ought, with every view of propriety, to suspend its determination. It is no small object of satisfaction to me, that the full review of former precedents, with respect to the present motion, forms a chief ground of it. In such an application of facts I have considerable reason to be pleased, and I trust I shall clearly demonstrate, before I sit down, that former precedents concur in justifying the measure which at this moment is so severely condemned.

I am, however, not a little surprised to hear the language made use of by an honorable magistrate, (Alderman Combe,) who has declared that he has received instructions from his constituents to join in a vote of censure against his Majesty's ministers, for having supplied the emperor with money without the authority of parliament. There is, perhaps, not any question on which a member ought to allow the decided dictates of his own conscience and judgment to be superseded by the instructions of his constituents;

but if there is any case in which a member ought to be particularly anxious to preserve his right of private judgment, it is in the present instance, with respect to a criminal charge; for I think it must be admitted, that it was impossible for the honorable gentleman's constituents to decide in a just and candid manner on the propriety of giving a vote on the motion, with the particulars of which they must be unacquainted, and more peculiarly as they must have been totally ignorant of the defence which his Majesty's ministers meant to set up. I have, Sir, to caution the house against those constitutional doctrines which have been maintained in former debates, and particularly on Thursday night last. But, without entering into a minute refutation of them, or stating those which I conceive to be strictly just, I cannot help observing, that much is saved for my purpose by the concessions which the right honorable gentleman himself (Mr. Fox) has made. I certainly do not wish to goad the right honorable gentleman into the former opinions he has at different times maintained: I am better content to take his present statements: I am better content with what I have heard from him to-day, and with those general principles which have fallen from him in support of his motion. For as, on a former occasion, when the present subject was first started, the interval of one night made him see the measure more inflammatory than it really is; it now appears that a pause of a few days have diminished his ideas of the inflammatory tendency, which, in his own opinion, it possessed. The right honorable gentleman has taken great pains to lay down the great constitutional principles with regard to pecuniary grants, and the use of

those grants. I did not understand, on a former night, that the honorable gentleman told us one thing, to which he said there was no exception, namely, that no expence could be incurred without the consent of parliament. I did not altogether subscribe to that doctrine, and I will state, as nearly as possible, the very words of the argument I then used in answer. I argued that the practice of extraordinaries had been adopted at different periods of the history of the country, at periods which the honorable gentleman must naturally think the most approved, when he himself was in the administration. Extraordinaries to a large amount, were used during the sitting of the parliament, and parliament afterwards justified the act by a vote. The honorable gentleman did then admit, that he never could be supposed to have said that extraordinaries should not be used without the consent of parliament, previously obtained; but when ministers have now adopted the same measures, the propriety of which the honorable gentleman said, he could not be supposed to deny, yet such is his alarm, that he cannot feel himself justified in pausing a moment on the necessity of the actual condemnation of ministers.

However, Sir, it is enough for my purpose to admit, that, according to the fundamental principles of the constitution, all grants must proceed from the commons; that they are afterwards subject to their control, is a principle undeniable; but although the commons are possessed of the power of controlling the application of the supplies raised by them; yet it is a circumstance proved to demonstration, by practice and general observation, that it would be impossible to carry on any wars, that it would be impossible for go-

vernment to proceed with due regard for the public service, if extraordinaries were not raised by parliament. In point of practice it is evident they have been raised. Those great writers who have written on the subject previous to the revolution, prove that extraordinaries have always been used from that period. I desire to refer to the practice of the whole of the succession of administrations from the days of King William down to the present time, when the principles of the constitution are become infinitely more definite, and when, owing to ambition on the part of France, public expenses, and the transactions of finance, have attained a greater magnitude; and I ask, whether from that period down to the present, the practice of extraordinaries has not been recognised and admitted? I do not mean of extraordinaries only, but of extraordinary services during the sitting of parliament. I do not date this as if there were only one or two solitary precedents, but as the uniform practice in all the wars in which this country has been engaged; and that, during such wars, the extraordinaries have been precisely of the description I have stated. Sir, our constitution is one which rests on great and leading principles, but still no one would wish that the constitution should experience any injury by pushing those principles to a rigid and extreme excess. If we are to look into the record books of the constitution, we shall find certain principles laid down, which seem to contradict many acts of parliament, which are held as strictly legal. If we examine the law of parliament, we shall find, that it is derived principally from the general tenor of the whole of the principles of the constitution, illustrated by the particular urgency and

necessity of circumstances. If this is the true way which men ought to study the constitution, by applying the principles of it to the exigency of circumstances, let me repeat what I stated on a former night, with respect to the impossibility of the measure being wrong, which was done in conformity to the best and most approved principles, as adapted to peculiar events; and let me also ask, how a measure can deserve to be loaded with obloquy and reproach, which, in truth, is no more than has been the practice of every administration, at those periods when we have been most proud of the constitution? I might remark, that the honorable gentleman in the course of his speech has admitted such to have been the practice, because he has himself acted upon it; yet I must admit that the honorable gentleman, when he stated that such was the practice observed, that because extraordinaries were consonant to practice, it was no reason they should be extended so far, if it could possibly be avoided. The honorable gentleman, if I understand him right, by that very mode of argument, of the extension of the extraordinaries being attended with so much the more mischief, does, in fact, admit the exception to the principle which he charges me with having violated, and, in short, destroys in effect the very principle he before admitted. He told us that every extraordinary service involved the breach of the pledge to satisfy former estimates, by removing the means of paying to some other service. If his doctrines mean to infer, that extraordinaries ought not to be unnecessarily extended, I cannot but perfectly coincide with him; but if his argument has for its object that of rendering all extraordinaries invidious, I hope, in such case, I may be allowed to guard the house against the effects of

attending too much to topics opposed to the very same principles which he has before admitted. That extraordinaries are liable to the future observation and control of parliament is true; but parliament has at all times felt, that it is necessary, for the public safety, that ministers should have the power of using extraordinaries, without appealing to parliament, provided that power, and the means by which those extraordinaries are incurred, are subject to future discussion.

But it is not the question of extraordinaries only that arises. Parliament, finding the impossibility of reducing every thing to estimated expenses, has introduced the practice of giving votes of credit, with the power, generally, to apply them as exigences may require. As far as it has been possible to provide against extraordinaries, which always hitherto has been impracticable, every endeavor has been exerted; but it is a circumstance in which parliament has certainly acted with great wisdom, that it has not thought proper at any time to interfere with respect to the amount of the sums which ministers might think necessary for supplying the extraordinaries, but merely to make ministers responsible for the application of the sums, and the necessity of the extraordinaries to the payment of which they are directed. Before I say any more, I will only observe, that it is not likely I should be one to dispute the propriety of the measure of providing for the extraordinaries by the extent of the vote of credit, if such a thing could be adopted; I have often heard it a matter of reproach to me, that I endeavored to estimate every expence, and provide for it before hand. The votes of credit were always smaller in former wars than in the present. In the present war, I have added to the vote of credit other

provisions for the purpose of providing for the extraordinary before hand; I may therefore be considered as having done all in my power towards endeavoring to take the previous authority of parliament. What then do I say, that there is no difference between a vote of credit and extraordinary? As to the vote of credit, I conceive it to be a privilege granted to his Majesty's ministers, to employ a given sum to any such purpose as the exigency of the affairs shall require. There is no circumstance, however unforeseen, there is no purpose, be it what it may, no possible event, to which ministers may not think it requisite that a vote of credit is applicable; no expenses upon sudden emergencies, which do not come within the spirit of a vote of credit, subject, however, to that principle which I shall state. [Here Mr. Grey took notes of what fell from the Chancellor of the Exchequer.] I observe an honorable gentleman taking notes of what I have just mentioned, and by his manner he seems to express disapprobation. I only hope he will not interrupt me, till he has done me the honor to attend to the whole of what I have to say, when I have no doubt but that I shall be able to convince him I am right. Have I said that, because a vote of credit is applicable to every public service, there is no question of responsibility? Have I said there is no principle of respect, of attention, of deference to parliament? I trust I have neither denied, nor at any one moment of my life have failed to shew, by my conduct, that such responsibility does exist. I know that for every exercise of that discretion, regularly given by the act, founded upon the vote of credit, ministers are subject to the same responsibility as for the exercise of every other discretion, which permanently belongs to them.

as ministers of the crown, and which they are bound to use for the safety, the welfare, and the dignity of the country; a discretion the more important, as it relates to the disposition of public money: and I trust parliament will not lose sight, that it is their duty to weigh those unforeseen difficulties on which alone government can use the powers with which it is entrusted.

But, Sir, I do not mean to stop here: I do not mean to say that government ought to be questioned as to the propriety of the measures it may think proper to recur to. I have admitted its liability to be censured. I will admit, that if, at that time of using a vote of credit, ministers foresee any expenditure which appears likely to be of consequence, either with respect to its amount, or to the importance or peculiarity of the subject, if it admits of a precise estimate, and if the subject is of such a nature that it can be divulged without injury or inconvenience to the public, I should readily admit that that minister would fail in his duty to parliament, that he would not act according to the sound principles of what I believe to be the constitution of the country, if he were not to state the nature of the emergency, and endeavour to estimate the expence; but if, from the nature of the exigency, it should be impolitic to divulge it, in that case, I conceive the minister justified who conceals it from parliament till a future season. By these principles, as to the general question, I am satisfied that my merits or demerits should be tried; if I have, in the opinion of the house, departed from the principles of the constitution, then I have committed an error in judgment: if through an error in judgment I have departed

from the principles of the constitution, I admit that I ought to receive the censure of the house, notwithstanding that error proceeded from my having felt it my irresistible duty, in common with the rest of his Majesty's ministers, to act upon principles which I conceived the best calculated to ensure the prosperity and advantage of the country. Let me not be supposed to admit what the honorable gentleman seems to assume as an instance of candour, namely, that he reserved the question, whether any degree of importance which might attach to the subject, could possibly be considered as an argument for concealing it, or that its importance could make any difference with regard to the estimate of its expense. Of the principle itself it is not material to say more; but with respect to what the honorable gentleman has stated, I will make this observation. He has said that extraordinaries are admitted on account of indispensable necessity, and that those extraordinaries are such a mischief, that he almost doubts whether they should be suffered at all. I will admit, that expense, be it what it will, is indubitably objectionable, and that if the expence arises to a considerable sum, the objection is still stronger; but the greater the expense, the higher is the advance on the responsibility of ministers, and the greater is the inducement for the house to vote to discharge those expenses. The only case has occurred which was in contemplation. If it should appear to the house, that in consequence of an unforeseen change of circumstances, the necessity of expenditure was increased; if it should appear that the only opportunity had arrived, in which there was no alternative but that of relinquishing the cause in which the country

was engaged or advancing the responsibility of ministers ; if, I say, this should appear, is it a mark of candour in the honourable gentleman to desire that the urgency only should be put out of the question ?

Why then, Sir, as to the utility of the advance to the emperor, whether it could have been made in a more proper form ; whether by a previous application to parliament, it would not have been attended with a greater degree of inconvenience ; whether the advance was not made at a time the most critical that could possibly have occurred—these are the questions which I shall shortly proceed to discuss. But assuming for the present, that there was a difficulty about the mode of doing it, what mode, under similar circumstances, would have been more eligible ? In this way it has been tried, and has succeeded : by previously applying to parliament, it is doubtful whether it would have succeeded or not. I entreat gentlemen to recollect the situation of the emperor on the continent ; the situation of this country, with respect to the prosecution of the war, or of its termination by a safe and honourable peace : I request them to look back to July or August last ; a period when we saw with regret and apprehension the triumphant arms of the French Republic at the gates of Munich, and the territorial possessions of the belligerent powers in danger of being wrested from them. When they look back to this period, let them at the same time contemplate the slow, firm, measured and magnanimous retreat of the gallant Austrian army, and the consequences which followed from a retreat only calculated to ensure the success of their future operations. Will they then ask themselves, dry as the question may be, when so animated a sub-

ject is presented to the mind, how far the assurance of the aid which this country was disposed to grant, may have invigorated the spirit of a country making its utmost efforts to resist an invading foe, how far it may have given confidence to their resources, and enable them to prosecute that line of operations which has been attended with such signal success? With these considerations in his view, is there any man who can regard as a matter of consequence, whether the expence of 900,000*l.* or 1,200,000*l.* has been incurred by the country? Is there any man who can question the propriety of the sum allotted for the object, and would be willing for the sake of so paltry a saving, to give up our share in promoting a service, which has terminated so honourably for the character of our allies and so beneficially for the general interests of Europe? Who would not rejoice that he was admitted into partnership so illustrious, and accompanied with such brilliant success?

*Me credite Lesbon,
Me Tenedon, Chrysenque, et Cyllan Apollinis urbes,
Et Scyron cepisse. Meâ concussa putate
Procubuisse solo Lyrnessia mœnia dextrâ.*

We have besides to consider, that whatever in this instance has been given, has only been lent to a power whom we have no reason to distrust. Even if a sum had been given to a much larger amount, it would surely have been amply repaid by the success which has attended the exertions of our allies, and the important advantages which have been gained to the common cause. In the course of discussion on this subject, frequent mention has been made of the opinion of

the public. The public are not so dead, nor so insensible, as either to be ignorant of the advantages which have been obtained, or ungrateful towards those to whose gallant exertions they are indebted on the present occasion. There is not a man, even the meanest individual in the country, who will not feel himself repaid for the small quota which he will be required to bring forward in aid of the public service, by the important benefits which have been secured to the general interests of Europe. There is not, I will venture to say, an Englishman who does not feel the most ardent sympathy with the magnanimity, the resources, the spirit and perseverance which have been displayed by Austria in her recent exertions, and who does not rejoice that the contributions of England have been brought forward in aid of operations which have been equally marked by their gallantry and success. I will not think so ill of the good sense of my countrymen, as to suppose they can regret any trifling expence, which has been the means of obtaining such signal advantages. The question alone is, whether there is any doubt of its necessity, and whether the service would have been performed by a previous statement to parliament.

“ Here, Sir, let me state to this house, or rather repeat what I have shortly stated on a former night. The house will recollect, that from the principles on which I conceive a government should act, it never could have been in my contemplation, or that of his Majesty’s ministers, under the vote of credit, to propose advancing the whole of the sum which turned out to be necessary for the emperor. That it was not my intention, is proved by this circumstance, that at the very period

of proposing the vote of credit, a reserve was expressly made for a loan to be specifically brought forward, and submitted to parliament, to a much larger amount than the vote of credit. What inference do I wish to draw from this? First of all, that it is a pretty clear and evident proof, that it in reality appeared, by the Austrians being so much in want, that his Majesty's ministers had an impression of the necessity of assisting the emperor. Could they have any motive to hold out a loan, if there was no such thing in agitation? What view could any government have in stating the necessity of an Austrian loan, if they did not see the occasion for one? When we asked for a vote of credit, it was plain we were not asking for a vote of credit for services unforeseen, but that we intended to apply it as it has been applied. Gentlemen will recollect, that on the first loan of eighteen millions, it was stated as uncertain the precise time it would be called for; that the precise time depended on the result of an intercourse between his Majesty and the emperor, without which it was impossible to settle the extent of it. But it is true, I felt that, in consequence of the extraordinary extent of the drain of money, some time would be necessary before the influx of trade would be such as to render a measure of that kind practicable in its execution, or safe in its impression; for of all subjects, that which relates to credit, or the stagnation of money, the delicacy of which every man knows, is that in which it is necessary to be particularly circumspect. Now, how does this stand? I was sanguine that a much shorter interval would have diminished the scarcity. Afterwards at a much later period, I found that it would be impossible to bring

forward the loan. Under this impression, I did not think it advisable to take the step I have taken, a short time previous to the end of the last parliament. How far that can be fairly imputed to me as a crime, is a question I shall have occasion to discuss. However, this is the first principle of my defence, that when the campaign was advancing, so that the emperor could not wait for any proof of the reality of his hopes of an increase of pecuniary supply, in conformity to what had been done before, and according to principles recognized by parliament, I thought it expedient, for the success of his armies, to send the means of repelling the enemy.

“The principal question is, whether this measure has deprived you of anything you possessed? whether any disadvantage has been the consequence of it, so as to make our situation more embarrassed now than it would have been some months ago, by a loan taking place? I believe the situation of mercantile men, and the pecuniary state of the country, is more favourable now than they were at the periods when the several remittances to the emperor were issued. This I state not merely on the suggestions of any particular member of this house, not merely in consequence of any discovered public opinion; but I state it on evident grounds of reason. Nor can I for a moment suppose that the members of this house, or that the public will long suspend the delegation of their assent to a measure founded equally in the justice and expediency of the motives which gave it birth. But however this may be, I have on this occasion the satisfaction of knowing that I am not stating my own sentiments only, but also those of the persons who were the contractors

for the last loan. The contractors for that loan themselves felt then, and have since communicated to me, the inconveniences that had resulted to commerce in general from the immense but necessary drains in the money market. They had felt that any specific proposition to guarantee a fresh loan to the emperor would have sensibly affected the money market: would have depreciated the funds, and depressed the public credit. Had I upon that occasion adopted the mode of a public loan; had I come to parliament, when parliament first sat to deliberate on public measures; had I, while the necessities of the empire and the dearest interests of Europe depended in some measure, the one for relief, the other for preservation, on the remittance of certain portions of that sum of 1,200,000*l.*;—had I in that eventful crisis done any thing that might, in its ultimate consequences, increase the difficulties of that ally, endanger and risk the liberties of Europe, what, let me ask, would have been the language of the honourable gentleman, who has this night censured my conduct, and made it the subject of a specific motion? I repeat it, the persons best acquainted with the money market were at the periods I have mentioned, deeply impressed with a sense of its growing embarrassment, and seriously felt the inconveniencies necessarily concomitant to a state of warfare. They felt those inconveniencies, but they more than felt the justice of the contest which had operated as the cause of them. In their opinion the pecuniary situation of the country was such as would have rendered the public avowal of any loan to the emperor extremely impolitic, and by an ill-timed discussion of its propriety, have produced those evils I have in part detailed. To them I sub-

mitted whether a public loan would be prudent in such circumstances, but they were unanimous in their preference of the adopted mode. A proof this, that I could have no intention to violate the constitution. That I had not hastily and immaturely adopted the alternative; that I made those preliminary arrangements; that my enquiries on the subject were as general and earnest as I have this night avowed, is well known not only to the individuals with whom I consulted, but also to my colleagues in the ministry. I appeal without fear of being contradicted, I appeal to those in my confidence, whether such were, or such were not my sentiments, whether such was or was not my conduct on that occasion? At this time the situation of the empire was so peculiar, that his Majesty's servants could not but have a strong and influencing sense of the impropriety of affording publicly the aid that situation so much required. The arms of the French republic were victorious in almost every quarter, the empire threatened with destruction, and Europe with ruin. This was I own the reverse of our once favourable hopes: from the exertions of that ally our expectations had been different; but could any temporary reverse of circumstances justify a measure that must have entailed on that ally a permanent mischief? Surely we, who had considered ourselves entitled to share in the good fortune of the arms of Austria, would not justly have separated our interests in her adversity. Surely that ally, of whose good faith and candour, of whose steady attachment to the principles of the alliance we had so many and such splendid proofs; that ally, who had almost singly resisted the progress of an impetuous and enthusiastic enemy; yes,

the house of Austria eminently merited our confidence and our esteem.—But these were not enough. The empire was in actual danger ; her treasury exhausted ; and many of her princes forced to abandon her defence. It was in this conjuncture that his Majesty's servants, faithful at least to their sense of the danger, afforded to Germany that assistance which I am proud to say had been in a great measure the means of saving, not only that particular empire, but a vast portion of Europe. Actuated by these considerations, thus hurried by existing necessities, to adopt a particular measure, I flatter myself few who hear me will in the end fail to discover, that the act itself, even supposing it to be unconstitutional, could not be the result of a deliberate intention to violate acts of parliament.

“The right honourable gentleman has supposed that the measure was now brought forward under cover of the Austrian successes ; but I have to remind that right honourable gentleman, and the house, that the resolution of his Majesty's ministers, to assist the emperor, was not taken under the flattering phantom of delusive glory, not because the house of Austria was resuming, under the auspices of one of its illustrious members, its former spirit, and had regained its ardour ; not because the French had been forced to abandon some places, and retreat from others in the German dominions ; but because their resolution was taken when ministers felt that they had an opportunity of giving to the emperor, Europe, and the country the best pledge of their sincerity, of their attention to their interests, of their individual integrity, and collective force. The resolution was not taken without contemplation of the risk, It was not undertaken without maturely considering

every relation in which it could possibly connect itself with the constitution. It was not undertaken in defiance of law, nor made a solitary exception to all former usage. It was not undertaken to cripple our finances, nor had it either prospectively, or retrospectively, any one thing in common with a deliberate insult to the house. But it was undertaken in a way, and upon an emergency which warranted the measure. Even the measure was warranted by the former opinions of my adversaries; but especially by the then and the present opinion of monied men. I shall perhaps be asked what is the difference between a loan in the manner that loan was transacted, and a loan granted in the old and popular way? What the difference between the direct and avowed disbursement of the public money, and an indirect and concealed disbursement? The former I shall, perhaps, be told, must have decreased the pecuniary resources of the country equally with the latter; and have lessened though in a secret manner, the general means of commercial security. But to this I cannot concede, because the reverse has been the fact. The fact has been, that by remitting money to the emperor in that season of difficulty, of doubt and danger, his Majesty's ministers have rendered less doubtful the prospects of a safe and honourable peace. Had ministers on that occasion, after being convinced themselves of the necessity and justice of such assistance, and during the recess of parliament, delayed the adoption of that conduct they have pursued, instead of affording to the emperor, the enemy, and Europe, a proof of superior wisdom, and superior resources, it would be a proof of the want of both, by giving the money publicly. By discussing

the subject in parliament at the earliest period, if such a discussion could be entered into, not only public credit would have been injured, but you would have told the enemy that your difficulties obliged you to stint the acknowledged wants of your allies. To those who thought worse of our resources than I did, to the public mind in general, such a measure in such a crisis, would, I know, have been a cause not of rejoicing but of sorrow ; not a source of pleasure but of pain. Every man who wished well to his country, every man sincerely attached to the principles of the constitution, instead of approving of that assistance being afforded originally as a loan, would have said, ‘ No, do not commit yourself to your ally, so as to make your necessities a test of his.’ If, instead of endeavouring to poise and remove the difficulty, as I have done, this house had so passed a public loan, such must have been the consequence. I am certain that had parliament been acquainted with the danger of our ally, and had even determined to give the necessary assistance, the publicity of the measure would have defeated the object. So that whether we had or had not been reduced to the alternative of refusing assistance altogether, the event must have produced collateral mischiefs. I may, therefore, I think, ask, ought you to yield to the pressure of temporary difficulty, and abandon your ally at a moment when such a step may be decisive of his fate? Ought you, on the other hand, completely to pledge yourselves to grant a pecuniary assistance which, in the first instance, may be attended with considerable inconvenience, and the influence on which, in the future course of events, you are unable to ascertain? Pledges of aid, and of instant aid, his Majesty’s servants had

already seen good reason to give to the emperor. These pledges had been given long before the meeting of parliament, and might justly be considered as very eminently conducive to every measure and every success which has been since adopted and experienced. It is, I know, one among the grounds on which the right honourable gentleman has brought his accusation, that a part of the money was sent previously to the meeting of parliament, and another ground, that money has been sent since its meeting. I own the advance to the emperor consists of sums sent since the meeting of the present parliament; but I do contend, that the pledges of these sums were the means by which the house of Austria endured adversity, and retrieved its prosperity. Had the emperor in July and August last, had no assurance of your assistance, I will not say we should have been at this moment a ruined people, but I will say, that the pecuniary security of England and the territorial security of Austria, had been diminished, if not utterly destroyed.

“ On a former night an honorable friend of mine, used as an argument, the effect which he thought a public discussion of the measure would have to depreciate the credit of the country; and I own I have not yet heard any thing that could induce me to think differently on that subject. The effect of a knowledge of the pecuniary distresses of the Emperor, joined to the difficulty which a prompt supply would have produced, could not fail to bear with peculiarly embarrassing weight on the course of exchange. Whereas the transmission of the sum of 1,200,000*l.* in different sums, and at different periods, tended greatly to relieve the Emperor, and preserve the credit of this country from

that depression which the same sum granted at once, and in the form of a public loan, would have occasioned; I need not, therefore, enumerate the particular dates of those bills. Our assurance to Austria was not confined to the meeting of parliament, not subjected to the delays of several months of recess, but it was given with reference to every situation of difficulty or danger in which the arms of the Emperor might be placed by the resistance to the arms of France. When the Austrian troops were retreating from their severe and glorious combat with the French republicans, they surely merited every assistance this country could afford them; but when, in the career of a brilliant series of the most splendid victories, those gallant men were urged by their emulation of the intrepidity of their invincible officers to acts of unparalleled prowess, his Majesty's servants found themselves called upon, most particularly called upon, to aid and promote their views, to soften their calamities, and to afford them means of securing their important conquests. On the conviction of the propriety of these sentiments, and of such conduct, it was, that the king's ministers had acted. Of the number of those who had been guided by these sentiments, I, Sir, certainly was one, not the least active to provide, nor I trust, the least vigilant to manage prudently that pecuniary stimulus, which, during the recess, and at other periods, was given to the arms of the empire. Our conduct, therefore, Sir, does not respect the months of October, of November, nor December in particular; but it had a clear and unerring relation to every crisis and circumstance, to every moment of danger. In truth, the acts themselves, were acts performed distinctly in com-

pliance with solemn engagements; they were acts in execution of pledges which had been previously given. Acting during the recess from the conviction that these pledges were given by the letter and the spirit of the existing treaties, acting after the parliament was met under the sanction of these treaties, with no intention then, and surely none now, of setting up their own judgment as the standard of, or superior to the judgment of the House of Commons, ministers, I think, may be permitted to avail themselves of the exceptions of all similar conduct. As to the transaction itself, no separation could fairly be made of the necessity which gave existence to the measure, and the motives which influenced its adoption. Even supposing the judgments of parliament could have been taken, the state of Germany was such, as could not have left gentlemen one moment to their doubts, whether or no it was proper to assist the Emperor. What ministers have done in pursuance of their pledge, was, however, done in a great measure before parliament could have assembled to consider of its expediency. Of the nature and effect of the services performed by the Emperor, gentlemen may very readily judge. They have them recorded in the annals of very recent periods, annals the most brilliant, perhaps, in the history of the world. Thus, whether we judge of the services of Austria in whole, or only in part, I think gentlemen must concede to me, that the services of the last three months have been, at least, such as merit our particular approbation. On this part of the subject I have, therefore, at present, scarcely any thing more to remark. I have, in the best manner I am able, stated to the house the circumstance of that situation which rendered it impossible for Austria to continue her warlike operations.

without assistance from this country. I have likewise endeavored to render my own conceptions of the sending money to an ally without the previous consent of parliament.

“As to the question of extraordinaries, I have heard the idea suggested, and something like an argument attempted to be deduced from it, that if its spirit be adhered to, no part of a vote of credit can be employed to pay foreign troops. I have heard too, that of such an application of the public money so voted, our annals scarcely afford any, and if any, not apposite precedents. Sir, I think I can instance a number of precedents of this kind; I can instance to this house, and for the information of the right honorable gentleman, that votes of credit were appropriated by our ancestors to the payment of foreign troops. In times before the revolution, but of those times gentlemen seem unwilling to say much, in the reign immediately before the revolution, this very thing had been done by the crown; but, Sir, in periods subsequent to the revolution, in periods not the least favored in our annals, although certainly not altogether free from the stains of calumny, but especially of party violence, in the reign of King William in the year 1701, accompanied by circumstances of a singularly important and curious nature, the parliament voted an extra sum for the payment of foreign forces. This sum was voted not regularly as a vote of credit, but it succeeded the granting of a vote of credit, and was a measure which, although it occasioned some trifling opposition, was carried unanimously. Such was the conduct of our ancestors at the revolution. In the reign of Queen Anne, a reign reprehended undoubtedly by some, a reign which had unhappily encouraged, if not occa-

sioned and fomented those differences which rendered the Tories so implacable against the Whigs; in that reign, thus chagrined by the persecutions, sanguinary persecutions, but latterly, and I will confess with not less cruelty, begun and continued by the Tories: in this reign, and in the years 1704 and 1705, both subsidies and grants had been employed in paying foreign forces. This too was done without the authority of parliament. In 1706, a transaction more directly characteristic of this, for which the ministers of the present day are censured, was publicly avowed, and as publicly discussed; yet it seems the right honorable gentleman had overlooked it. This at least seems to be the case; or, if known, he certainly ought to have abandoned his assertion. There is to be met with in the annals of the parliament of that day, an account of three different sums, each considered, by the opposition of that day, as violations of the constitution—a remittance to the Duke of Savoy, to the Emperor, and to Spain. A sum too had been paid in the same manner to the Landgrave of Hesse for a corps of his troops then in the pay of England. All these sums were not voted regularly after the specific propositions submitted for that purpose to the house, but were remitted to those sovereigns without the previous consent of parliament. Not even estimates of the services, for which the sums had been paid, were laid before the house till six weeks after its meeting. The sum sent to the Emperor was peculiarly distinguished,—it had been transmitted, not at the close, not during the recess of that session in which it was first announced to parliament, but before the end of the preceding session. These proceedings did certainly attract the notice of

the House of Commons, and the public had been addressed on the unconstitutionality of the measure; then, as now, there had been employed every effort which ingenuity could suggest; every vehicle of public communication rendered a vehicle of asperity and censure on the conduct of ministers. It became the subject of a solemn discussion—a discussion, apparently not less vehement than it was labored and profuse. But how, Sir, did the ministers of that day retire from the combat? Did they retire overwhelmed with virulence and abuse, the censure of the discerning and temperate members of that parliament? Or were those their actions, distinguished by the approbation of the commons of Great Britain? Sir, the minister of that day had the satisfaction to see the attack of his adversaries repelled, and their expressions of censure changed to approbation. That minister, Sir, heard his conduct applauded, and the journals of this house were made to bear record that the sense of its members was, that the sums advanced to the Emperor on that occasion had been productive, not only of the preservation of the empire, but had also supported and maintained the interests of Europe. In the year 1718, in the beginning of the reign of George the First, an instance of the application of the public money occurred, which, though not so analogous as the last, I think it right to mention. A message had been received from his Majesty, soliciting the aid of the commons to make such an augmentation of the actual forces of the country as might be deemed necessary to place it in a respectable state of defence; and that because there had been an appearance of an invasion. —At this time his Majesty takes Dutch troops into

his pay, and the money voted to raise and maintain native troops, is disbursed for the use of a foreign corps. It is true this body of Dutch troops were landed in England, and their services confined to it; but not even these affected much the application of the fact as a precedent. However, Sir, in the year 1734, a period nearer our own times, a general vote of credit was granted. That vote of credit was applied on such occasions, and for such purposes as might at any time during its existence, arise out of the exigencies of the time. On the 18th of February of the subsequent year, a vote of credit was also granted, and a treaty concluded with Denmark. And, Sir, if I have not totally misconceived the passage of our parliamentary history where these facts are stated, this last, as well as the vote of credit immediately preceding it, was applied to purposes in their nature not unlike those to which necessity impelled ministers of the present day to apply the vote of 1796. It might also refer gentlemen, to another instance of an advance to foreign troops. An advance to the Duke of Arenberg, commander of the Austrian forces, in the year 1742, was noticed in debate and censured in the administration of Mr. Pelham—a name as dear to the friends of constitutional liberty, as perhaps any that could be mentioned; but the enquiry was avoided by moving the previous question. It happened, however, that not long after, the same question was made the subject of a specific discussion. It appeared that the advance had been made under the authority of an assurance expressed by Lord Carteret, and not in consequence of any previous consent of parliament; but it appeared also that the progress of the Austrian troops was

considerably accelerated by the influence of that aid, and their subsequent successes owing chiefly to it. The vote of censure, therefore, which had been founded on the act of Lord Carteret, was amended, and the advance declared necessary to the salvation of the empire. But, Sir, let us compare the crisis of 1796 with that 1787, when the expenses incurred by our endeavours to protect Holland were recognized under the head of secret services. This too was an unanimous recognition of the act which, had it been the offspring of 1796, the right honourable gentleman, influenced by his new opinions, would, I have no doubt, have marked with his disapprobation; but so stood the fact then.

“The members who sat in the last parliament have not forgot that when a loan of four millions and a half was proposed to be granted to the emperor, the intention of granting that loan was known as early as February 1795. A message had been received from his Majesty, stating that a negociation was pending with the emperor to maintain 200,000 men. The loan to be granted when the negociation succeeded, and when it failed to be mentioned. Soon after the answer to this message was communicated to the throne, a motion was made for an account of 250,000*l.* advanced to the emperor in May, 1795; and again a similar motion was made for an account of 300,000*l.* also advanced to the emperor in the month of May following. With respect to these sums, it was agreed by the house before the loan was debated, that they might afterwards be made good out of the loan. This, Sir, I have stated to shew that the members who sat in the last parliament cannot be altogether ignorant of the principles of

the constitution. After the negociation was concluded, the loan was debated; the house was divided, but no objection was made to these advances. On the subject of the Prince of Condé's army being supplied with money by this country, I can only say, that whatever sums that army has, as yet received, have been paid, on account of services rendered, as forming a part of the Austrian forces. The circumstances of a part of the 1,200,000*l.* stated as being sent to the emperor, being afterwards received in this country in part payment of the interest due on the second Austrian loan, is also clearly accounted for, these payments, on account of being in their nature the same, as if the emperor, instead of being so accommodating to himself as to pay the money, by his agent, on the spot, had ordered it to be sent to Vienna, and transmitted by the same post to this court.

“ I may now, Sir, I think be permitted to ask, on what principle of justice a criminal charge can be brought againss me for merely having followed the uniform tenor of precedent, and the established line of practice? By what interpretation of a candid and liberal mind can I be judged guilty of an attempt wantonly to violate the constitution? I appeal to the right honourable gentleman himself, who is not the last to contend for the delicacy which ought to be used in imputing criminal motives to any individual, and to urge in the strongest terms the attention which ought to be shewn to the candid an impartial administration of justice. In what country do we live? and by what principle are we to be tried? By the maxims of natural justice and constitutional law, or by what new code of some revolutionary tribunal? Not longer than a

year and a half since, the same principle was adopted, and suffered to pass without any animadversion; and now, a crisis of ten-fold importance, and where the measure has not outrun the exercise of a sound discretion, it is made the foundation of a criminal charge. We are accused with a direct and wanton attack upon the constitution. It is not supposed that we have been actuated by any but the blackest and most malignant motives. We are not allowed the credit of having felt any zeal for the interest of our country, nor of those advantages which the measure has produced to the common cause.

“I have now weighed the whole merits of the transaction before the house, and with them I am well content to leave the decision. While we claim a fair construction on the principles and intentions which have guided our conduct, if it shall appear that it has in the smallest instance deviated from any constitutional principle, we must submit to the consequence, whatever be the censure or the punishment. It is our duty, according to the best of our judgment to consult for the interest of the country; it is your sacred and peculiar trust to preserve inviolate the principles of the constitution. I throw myself upon your justice, prepared in every case to submit to your decision; but with considerable confidence, that I shall experience your approbation. If I should be disappointed, I will not say that the disappointment will be heavy, and the mortification severe; at any rate however it will to me be matter of consolation, that I have not from any apprehension of personal consequences, neglected to pursue that line of conduct which I conceive to be essential to the interests of the country and

of Europe. But while I bow with the most perfect submission to the determination of the house, I cannot but remark on the extraordinary language which has been used on this question. Ministers have been broadly accused with a wanton and a malignant desire to violate the constitution : it has been stated that no other motive could possibly have actuated their conduct. If a charge of such malignant intention had been brought against men who have affirmed the present war to be neither just nor necessary, and who on that ground cannot be supposed friendly to its success ; who have extolled, nay, even exulted in the prodigies of French valour ; who have gloried in the successes of the foes of civil liberty, the hostile disturbers of the peace of Europe, men who blasphemously denied the existence of the Deity, and who had rejected and trampled on every law, moral and divine ; who have exclaimed against the injustice of bringing to trial persons who had associated to overawe the legislature ; those who very gravely and vehemently asserted, that it was a question of prudence, rather than a question of morality, whether an act of the legislature should be resisted ; those who were anxious to expose and aggravate every defect of constitution, to reprobate every measure adopted for its preservation, and to obstruct every proceeding of the executive government to ensure the success of the contest in which we were engaged in common with our allies ; I say, if such a charge of deliberate and deep-rooted malignity were brought against persons of this description, I should conceive that even then the rules of candid and charitable interpretation would induce us to hesitate in admitting its reality ; much more when it is brought against individuals, whose conduct, I trust, has ex-

hibited the reverse of the picture I have now drawn. I appeal to the justice of the house, I rely on their candour; but, to gentlemen who can suppose ministers capable of those motives which have been imputed to them on this occasion, it must be evident that I can desire to make no such appeal."

The difference of opinion in Mr. Pitt at different times with regard to reform in parliament, has excited such attention as to give peculiar interest to his speech on the subject when proposed by Mr. Grey, afterwards Lord Howick. The question coming on the 26th of May, 1797, Mr. Pitt delivered himself as follows:—"Feeling, Sir, as I do, the danger with which the present proposition is attended, upon the grounds upon which it has been supported, and in the circumstances in which it has been brought forward, I am very desirous, as early as possible, in the debate, to state the reasons by which I am determined to give it my most decided opposition. The honourable gentleman who introduced the motion, began with disclaiming very distinctly, and as far as he went very satisfactorily, all those abstract principles of imprescriptible right, all those doctrines of the rights of man, which those without doors, who are most eager in their professions of attachment to the cause which he now supports, rest the propriety of their demand, and upon which alone they would be contented with any species of parliamentary reform. The honourable gentleman denies the truth of that principle which prescribes any particular form of government, as that which is essential to freedom; or that universal suffrage is necessary to civil liberty; or that it must even depend upon that light which the revolution of France

has let in upon the world, and from which he derives hopes of such great advantage to the general happiness of mankind. But, in disclaiming these views of the question, and in placing it upon the footing of the practical benefit it was likely to produce, the honourable gentleman did not state all the considerations by which the conduct of a wise statesman was to be regulated, and the judgment of an upright senator to be guided. The question was not merely, whether some alteration might or might not be attended with advantage; but it is the degree of advantage which that alteration is likely to effect, in the shape in which it is introduced; the mischief which may be occasioned from not adopting the measure, and the chance, on the other hand, of producing by the alteration an effect upon those to whom you give way, very different from that which induced you to hazard the experiment. These are the considerations upon which the subject ought to embrace, and the views upon which impartial men must decide.

“ Before we adopt the conclusions of the right honourable gentleman, we have a right, it is even imposed upon us as a duty, to take in our view as a leading object, what probability there is by encouraging the particular mode of attaining that union, or of effecting that separation of friends of moderate reform, and the determined enemies to the constitution, which they conceive it probable to produce; we must consider the danger of introducing an evil of so much greater magnitude than that we are now desirous to repair; and how far it is prudent to give an opening for those principles which aim at nothing less than the total annihilation of the whole constitution. The learned

gentleman who seconded the motion said, that those who formerly supported parliamentary reform had sown the seeds of that eagerness for parliamentary reform, which was now displayed, and of the principles on which it was now pressed; he thinks that those, who had ever supported the cause of parliamentary reform upon grounds of practical advantage, must not oppose those who have nothing in common with them, but the name of reform, making that the cause for subjects widely different, in order to support that pretence which they assume upon principles diametrically opposite to those upon which the true friends to the cause of reform ever proceeded. Will the honourable gentleman who made, or the learned gentleman who seconded the motion, say that those men who contend as an indispensable point for universal suffrage;—that those who hold doctrines, which go to the extinction of every branch of the constitution, because they think it convenient to avail themselves of the pretence of parliamentary reform, as the first step towards the attainment of their own views, and as facilitating their progress;—that those who, though they condescended to take advantage of the co-operation of those who support the cause of reform in this house, yet have never applied to parliament, and who would not even receive as a boon, what they contend for as a right; can it seriously be said, that such men as these have embarked in the cause, or have proceeded on the principles of those, who upon far different grounds, and for far different objects, have moved this important question? Will they say, that those men have adopted the principle, or followed the course of those who formerly have agitated the cause of reform, who have

avowedly borrowed their political creed from the doctrines of the Rights of Man, from the writings of Thomas Paine, from the monstrous and detestable system of the French jacobins and affiliated societies, from that proud, shallow, and presumptuous philosophy, which, pretending to communicate new lights to mankind, has carried theoretical absurdity higher than the wild imaginations of the most extravagant visionaries ever conceived, and carried practical evil to an extent which no age nor history has equalled? Will it be said, that those men pursued only that practical advantage, which a reform upon principles consonant to the British constitution was calculated to afford, who saw, without emotion, the detestable theories of the jacobins developed in the destructive ravage which marked their progress, and their practical effect in the bloody tragedies which were acted on the theatre of France, and who still adhered to their system of indefeasible right, when they saw such overwhelming proofs of its theoretical falsehood, and of its baleful tendency? Will it be believed that those men are actuated by principles consonant to the spirit of the British constitution, who, with the exception of the pretence of parliamentary reform, of French political systems, who followed them through all their consequences, who looked upon the ravage which they spread through all laws, religion, and property, without shrinking from their practical effect, and who deemed the horrors with which it was attended, as the triumphs of their system? Can we believe that men, that remained unmoved by the dismal example which their principles had produced, whose pretensions rose and fell with the success of jacobinism in every part of the world,

were ever actuated by a similarity of motives and of objects, with those who prosecuted the reform as a practical advantage, and maintained it upon constitutional views? The utmost point of difference, indeed, that ever subsisted between those who supported and those who opposed the question of reform, previous to the French revolution, which forms a new æra in politics, and in the history of the world, was union and concert in comparison with the views of those who maintained that question upon grounds of expediency, and those who assert it as a matter of right.

“ The question then was, with those who contended for reform on grounds of expediency, whether the means proposed were calculated to infuse new vigour into the constitution? The object with those who affect a parliamentary reform upon French principles, is the shortest way to compass its utter destruction. From the period when the new and alarming æra of the French revolution broke in upon the world, and the doctrines which it ushered into light laid hold on the minds of men, I found that the grounds on which the question rested were essentially and fundamentally altered. Whatever may have been my former opinion am I to be told that I am inconsistent, if I feel that it is expedient to forego, the advantage which any alteration may be calculated to produce, rather than afford an inlet to principles with which no compromise can be made; rather than hazard the utter annihilation of a system under which this country has flourished in its prosperity, by which it has been supported in its adversity, and by the energy and vigour of which it has been enabled to recover from the difficulties and distresses, with which it has had to contend? In the

warmth of argument upon this subject, the honourable and learned gentleman has conceived himself at liberty to assume a proposition, which was not only unsupported by reasoning, but even contradicted by his own statements. The learned gentleman assumed that it was necessary to adopt the moderate reform proposed, in order to separate those whom such a plan would satisfy, from those who would be satisfied with none; but who, I contend, by means of this, would labour to attain the complete object of their wishes in the annihilation of the constitution. Those men who treat parliament as a usurpation, and monarchy as an invasion of the rights of man, would not view a reform which was not the recognition of their right, and which they would consider as vitiated if conveyed in any other shape. Though such men had availed themselves of the aid of those who supported parliamentary reform on other grounds, would they be contented with this species of reform as an ultimate object?

“ But does the honourable and learned gentleman mean to assume that those who are the friends of moderate reform (and I know not how such a wish has been expressed at all) must remain confounded with those whom no reform will satisfy, unless some measure like the present is adopted? Where has such a wish for moderate reform been expressed? If those who are even thought to entertain sentiments favourable to that cause, have cherished them in silence, if they have abstained from pressing them at a moment when they would have served only to promote the views of those who wished to annihilate, not to reform, is it to be apprehended that any ill effects will ensue, unless you adopt some expedient to distinguish

the moderate reformer from the desperate foe? Yet this is the main argument of the learned gentleman, which he has put into a thousand different shapes. I do not believe, however, that the temper of moderate reformers will lead them to make common cause with the irreconcilable enemies of the constitution. If there are really many who may be ranked as moderate reformers, it is at least probable they may feel the force of the danger which I have stated; that they think it wiser to check their wishes than to risk the inlet of jacobin principles, and the imprudence of affording to the enemies of the constitution the means of accomplishing its destruction. Has there been, however, any decisive manifestation of their desires, or is there reason to believe, that, disappointed in their wishes, they will be immediately driven beyond the bounds of duty to the constitution? If there is no security that those whose views have already pointed beyond reform, will be recalled to better sentiments, if there are even certain grounds to believe that they will merely employ any reform that may be introduced, as a step towards realizing their own system, upon what pretence can the present measure be held out as calculated to reconcile those men to the constitution? From the conduct of gentlemen on the other side, it is obvious that they do not conceive any decisive manifestation of the wishes of the people for a moderate reform being now introduced, to have taken place. My reason for such an opinion is this: we have seen that the gentlemen in opposition have not been deficient in their efforts to procure every expression of the public concurrence in the objects for which they have contended. From their own account

these efforts have not been unsuccessful; but, supposing that no efforts of theirs had been employed, and that to the spontaneous impulse of the people themselves are to be ascribed the petitions which have been voted in different quarters, to a degree, indeed, in their opinion, to decide the sense of the country to be in favour of an immediate peace, and the removal of ministers, it follows, that those who have presented such petitions have not felt, or the exertions of opposition have not been able to excite, any expression of that opinion they have so often urged, that no change of men, without a change of system, would lead to any permanent good.

— “It does not appear then, that there is any call upon the house to adopt a measure which, so far from being necessary to satisfy men friendly to a moderate reform, they have not, in any shape, expressed a wish to obtain. Before the practical expediency of this measure, then, comes to be discussed, the practical necessity of such a measure must be established. In this proof, however, the honourable and learned gentlemen have failed; I need not, therefore, go into the state of the country to refute the statements of the honourable gentlemen. Indeed I must observe that every thing urged upon this topic, was nothing more than assertion. The calamities and difficulties under which the country labours, the war with France, and inroads upon the constitution, the profusion of public expenditure were the topics upon which they insisted, and which they said would have been avoided if parliamentary reform had formerly been adopted. I boldly contend, however, that in the origin of the war, in the efforts to an unparalleled extent which the novelty of

the contest, and the nature of the enemy forced us to exert; that in what they call inroads, and which we contend were necessary bulwarks for the defence of the constitution, the feelings of the people went uniformly along with the proceedings of parliament. I will venture to assert, without the fear of contradiction, that in no time when the tide of prosperity began to turn in favour of this country, when the nation began to recover from the struggles, and from the burthens of the American war, when, year after year, the sources of public wealth and individual happiness were increasing and extending, had the functions of parliament been more congenial to the feelings of the people, than in the painful yet necessary struggles we were obliged to submit to in the present contest. That the nation has suffered, during the progress of the war, many and serious calamities, I do not dispute; calamities, however, much less severe in their effects than those which have been undergone by countries acting upon a different system.

“It has, indeed, been urged, and with no ordinary degree of perseverance, that the voice of the nation is against the proceedings of government: that, however, is more a matter of opinion than of fact; and every man will naturally judge of the credit that ought to attach to such an assertion, from the sentiments which are expressed in the circle of his own acquaintance, and from his personal enquiries on the subject. But I will undertake to say, that at the present moment, amidst all the difficulties and embarrassments, unavoidably occasioned by the vigorous prosecution of hostilities, the system pursued by parliament in support of the measures of government, is the system of the peo-

ple; and parliament at no period possessed in a more ample degree, the confidence of the country than it does now. [Here Mr. Fox shewed some signs of dissent.] The honourable gentleman may be disposed to controvert this opinion, but I am sure he cannot maintain the contrary with more sincerity or more perfect conviction, than I advance what I now assert. The right honourable gentleman, the house will recollect, was accustomed to assert last session of parliament, with equal boldness and vehemence as now, that the sense of the country was against the system of ministers. Good God! Where can the honourable gentleman have lived? In what remote corner of the country can he have passed his time? What great public question can he state, upon which the public have not evinced a great degree of interest, as great as that shewn on any former occasion? On the contrary, if ever there was a period which we should select, as the one in which the attention of the public was most turned to public affairs, it was precisely that period in which the learned gentleman has described the public to have lost all interest in the deliberations of parliament.

“ I know it is maintained that parliament does not represent the great body of the nation, and that the result of general elections gives no striking character or impressive feature of the sentiments of the people; but I desire it may also be recollected, whether there are not many leading instances, and particularly circumstances attendant on general elections, that go strongly to express the opinion entertained by the constituent body; and taking up the consideration in that point of view, I do insist, and am convinced the position cannot be objected to, that the approbation

given by those who had been members of the last parliament, to the commencement and prosecution of the war, were strong and powerful recommendations in their favour at the late general elections. I will for a moment, pursuing this argument, request the house to take the parliamentary representation as it has been stated, and recommended by the honourable gentleman (Mr. Grey). I will desire the honourable gentleman himself to look for an instant to his own statement of the proposed additional representation of the counties, and then candidly decide whether he can argue that the sense of the people was not in a great degree to be collected at general elections? It is submitted in that statement to extend the number of county members from ninety-two to one hundred and thirteen; the augmentation, therefore, did not consist of many: and does the honourable gentleman intend to except the ninety-two former members by a general proscription? or will he pretend to say, that the system of counties, as it stands at present in point of representation, goes for nothing? Certainly he cannot undertake to advance such an argument, and so evidently inconsistent with his own plan of reform. If, therefore, the one hundred and thirteen members proposed by the honourable gentleman to represent the counties, would express the true sense of the people, it cannot be denied on the same grounds, that the ninety-two who were elected by their constituents, were in a very considerable proportion the organs of the public opinion. The arguments therefore adduced by the honourable gentleman go against his own declaration, that the sense of the people was not the sense of

parliament; and that sense had been fully manifested in favour of the war at the general elections."

Mr. Pitt proceeded to draw his deductions from what he had heard, and to compare the imaginary blessings to be expected from the French revolution with the advantages which had been derived to this country from that of 1688. He shewed that, however disguised, the principle of the present movers was, nothing less than universal suffrage, without any of the modifications which an object of such magnitude naturally demanded. He added:—

"It never was contended that the inequality of the representation has been attended with any practical disadvantage, that the interest of Yorkshire was neglected because it sent only two members to parliament, or that Birmingham and Manchester experienced any ill consequence from having no representatives. How does it appear that universal suffrage is better than if the right to vote be founded on numerical, or even alphabetical arrangement? There is no practice, certainly no recognized practice, for its basis. The experiment proposed is new, extensive, overturning all the ancient system, and substituting something in its stead without any theoretical advantage, on any practical recommendation. In the mixed representation which now subsists, the scot and lot elections are those which have been chiefly objected to, and the honourable gentleman opposite to me formerly agreed with me in opinion, that burgage tenures and small corporations were even less exceptionable than open burghs, with small qualifications. Yet this extension, of small qualifications, from which it has been a general complaint that much confusion, debauchery and abuse at elec-

tions arose, forms the principal feature in the honourable gentleman's plan."

Such were some of the prominent objects of attack on the administration of Mr. Pitt, in which it is no wonder that we should be led to exceed the bounds which we have prescribed to ourselves, by those emanations of enlightened eloquence which have excluded every feeble observation or trivial narrative. In truth, much that it had been hoped might have been given, to shew this great man to his countrymen, such as he was during his arduous life, is of necessity suppressed; for even a brief account of what must assume a strain insignificant indeed when compared with the poorest efforts of William Pitt.

To this discussion which has perhaps afforded in the speech of the minister a clearer view, (when compared with his former speeches) of the subject of parliamentary reform than can be otherwise obtained, the mutiny of the seamen in May and June 1797, succeeded in the list of important events.

This was that momentary error of a portion of the British fleet, which forgetting in the indolence of preparation the nervous force which guided, and the judicious arm which led them on to victory, created an alarm in the country which only themselves could suppress. How effectually it was suppressed, however, the long and severe cruize in the North Sea, and its brave result will testify to the present age and to posterity, while the name of Duncan enrolled among her brightest heroes, shall ennoble the annals of Britain. To this event justice demands it should be added, that Mr. Sheridan, a powerful member of the dignified opposition of the day, was the first to avow the entire

disapprobation of himself and colleagues of the inconsiderate proceeding, that delusion might not be increased by the endeavors of disaffected persons to add to it the sanction of himself and colleagues.

In fact this moment was pregnant with difficulty and terror, and all that Burke and other members who had clearly seen the bent of the French revolution had observed, became realized in the events of the day. The observation of Mr. Canning on the discussion of the Sardinian treaty, in 1794, now recurred in every step. That gentleman* in the most energetic terms observed,

* George Canning, of a respectable family in Ireland, was born in London in 1771. Under the direction of his paternal uncle, a merchant in the city, he received the rudiments of education, and was sent to Eton, where he distinguished himself by his oratory in fictitious debate; and in conjunction with Mr. Frere, Lord Spencer, and others, produced a periodical work, entitled *The Microcosm*, by Gregory Griffin. From Eton he went to Christ church, Oxford, where his taste for Latin composition, and his elegant English verses soon rendered him conspicuous. They procured for him also the notice of several young men of rank, among whom was Mr. Jenkinson, afterwards Lord Hawkesbury, which tended not a little to his future advancement. From Oxford Mr. Canning removed to the Inner Temple, where he became intimate with Mr. Sheridan and several of the opposition members. In 1793 he was elected member of parliament for Newton in Hampshire, and at the next general election, for Wendover, in the county of Bucks. In the interim, however, he became attached to Mr. Pitt by the fondest ties of friendship, and had been at once received by the minister into the fullest confidence, a circumstance noticed by Mr. Mathias in his *Pursuits of Literature*, when he observes—

“And seize on Pitt, like Canning, by surprize.”

He immediately became jointsecretary to the department for foreign affairs, then under Lord Grenville, and afterwards receiver-general of the alienation office. In 1800 he mar-

“ that had it not been for the war, some corresponding revolutionary society might have possibly been

ried the youngest daughter of the late General Scott, sister of the Marchioness of Titchfield. When Mr. Pitt withdrew from power Mr. Canning accompanied him, and exerted himself with all the energy of friendship in behalf of the character of the ex-minister. An instance of which, as well as a no unfavourable specimen of his ready poetical powers, will be given hereafter in the verses composed for a convivial party in the city, in honour of Mr. Pitt, under the title of “ The Pilot that weathered the Storm.” On the return of Mr. Pitt to power his friend was not neglected. Mr. Canning now became treasurer of the navy, and a member of the committee of trade and plantations, and a prominent speaker on every important occasion.—Nor will it be found that the friendship of Mr. Canning for his great prototype, was bounded merely by political zeal; since this volume, feeble except as it has availed itself of the powers of its immortal subject and his compeers, is proud to be closed by a poetical testimony from the same exquisite pen, to the memory of his departed friend.

The following is the *jeu d'esprit* already mentioned; the point from which it derives its title admirably turning on the popular character of Mr. Addington, as having steered the great vessel of the country into the haven of peace:—

“ IF hush'd the loud whirlwind that ruffled the deep,
The sky if no longer dark tempests deform,
When our peril is past shall our gratitude sleep?
No, here's to the pilot that weather'd the storm.

At the footstool of power let flattery fawn,
Let faction her idols extol to the skies,
To virtue in humble retirement withdrawn,
Unblam'd may the accents of gratitude rise.

And shall not his mem'ry to Britain be dear,
Whose example all nations with envy behold,
A statesman unbiass'd by int'rest or fear,
By pow'r uncorrupted, untainted by gold.





LORD HAWKESBURY.

Pub. Apr. 20 1801 by James Goulet London.

sitting on the benches of that house; and instead of debating on a treaty of alliance, might have been agi-

Who, when terror and doubt through the universe reign'd,
While rapine and treason their standard unfurl'd,
The heart and the hopes of his country maintain'd,
And one kingdom preserv'd midst the wreck of the world.

Unheeded, unthankful we bask in the blaze,
While the beams of the sun in full majesty shine,
When he sinks into twilight, with fondness we gaze
And mark the mild lustre that gilds his decline.

So, Pitt, when the cruize of thy greatness is o'er,
Thy talents, thy virtues, we fondly recal;
Now justly we prize thee, when lost we deplore;
Admir'd in thy zenith but lov'd in thy fall.

O take, then, for dangers by wisdom repell'd,
For evils by courage and constancy brav'd,
O take, for a throne by thy counsels upheld,
The thanks of a people thy firmness has sav'd!

And O, if again the rude whirlwind should rise,
The dawning of peace should fresh darkness deform,
The regrets of the good, and the fears of the wise
Shall turn to the pilot that weather'd the storm.

Of the strenuous supporter of Mr. Pitt's administration already mentioned in the preceding notice, there cannot be more fit opportunity to speak.

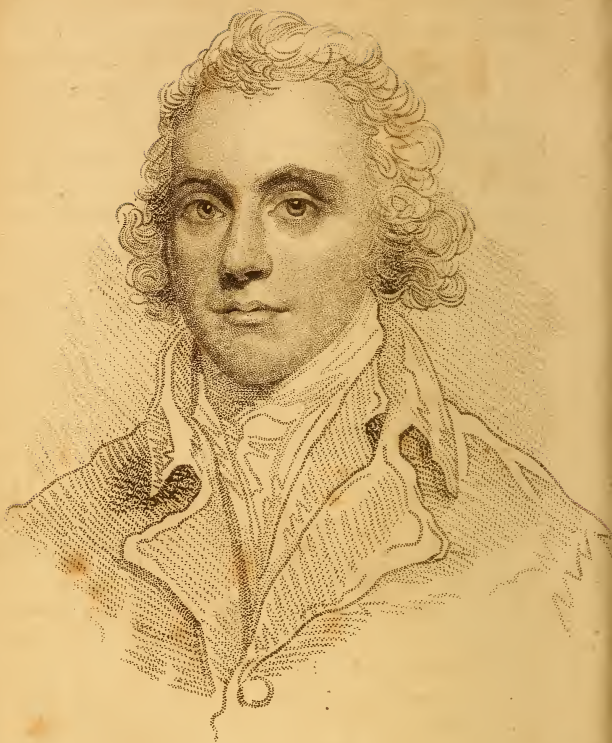
The right honourable Robert Banks Jenkinson, son of the Earl of Liverpool and the daughter of governor Watts of Bengal, who died a few months after his birth, was born the 7th of June, 1770. At a very early age he was placed at the academy of Parson's Green, near Fulham, and from thence removed to the Charter-House. At this nursery of great men of the present age he was considerably distinguished for his classical attainments, and from it removed well prepared to Christ Church, Oxford. Being na-

tating the question of a forced loan, demanded in the name of some proconsular deputy, from the French convention."

It were endless to state the various topics on which Mr. Pitt with no less force displayed his ratiocinative eloquence, or the various forms in which the animosity of opposition attacked him. Yet he persevered in the course he had marked out to himself with a zeal

turally designed for high offices of state, Lord Liverpool directed the attention of his son particularly to public economy, and in this important and interesting science his advancements were nearly equal to what they had been in his former pursuits. Having completed this education, so various, Mr. Jenkinson visited the continent, and was in Paris at the commencement of the French revolution, on the transactions of which he afforded considerable information to government. In 1790 he came to England, and was elected member of parliament for the borough of Rye in Sussex, but being yet under age he returned to the continent till the next year, when he took his seat, and almost immediately defended the interference of Great Britain in the arrangements between Russia and Turkey concerning Oczakow. In 1793, he became one of the commissioners for India affairs, and in 1794 received the command of the Fencible Cinque Port cavalry. In 1779, he succeeded Sir George Yonge in the mastership of the mint, and became one of the lords of trade and plantations. His lordship also married one of the daughters of the Earl of Bristol, Bishop of Derry. With Mr. Pitt he retired, on the accession of the Addington administration, (1801) and returned with that minister to office in 1804, when he became secretary of state for the home department, with a seat at the board of controul. Notwithstanding the severe censure handed down to posterity of this nobleman by Mr. Belsham, on his supposed deficiency in the graces of speech, he is certainly conversant with subjects of the highest national concerns, and capable of rendering no common service to a state so constituted as that of Britain.





LORD SIDMOUTH.

Engraved, 1807, by James Cundee, London

undaunted and laudable, and honourable to himself and country.

The rebellion of Ireland, that ill-fated country so long doomed to intestine contentions, broke out in all its horrors, at once the confirmation of Mr. Pitt's predictions, and the most arduous object of his administration.

As a private incident worthy of notice in the life of this great minister, it may be mentioned, that, about this time, in consequence of some allusions to the sentiments of Mr. Tierney, member for Southwark, that gentleman retired from the house with an intimation to which Mr. Pitt immediately attended, and the consequence was a meeting at Wimbledon Common. Happily the consequences were not so fatal to the interests of Britain as might have been expected from the rancour of party, in a rencontre so sudden and entirely political; for Mr. Pitt, having received his opponent's fire, discharged his own pistol in the air, and the affair ended in the interference of the seconds.

In fact, what remains of official affairs, however varied in their minutia, and important in their end, possess a degree of sameness which with having accorded so much of our space to the effusions of his own eloquence, will render it necessary to curtail in future. The causes of Mr. Pitt's retirement* from administration in favour of Mr. Addington, afterwards Lord Sidmouth, previous to the treaty of Amiens, are either sufficiently known or so little capable of discussion as merely to require their mention.

* In conformity with the rule hitherto observed, a list is added of the members who composed the new administration :—

During this retirement the ex-minister, found, as may easily be supposed, an employment worthy of his

Duke of Portland, President of the Council.

Lord Eldon, Lord Chancellor.

Earl of Westmoreland, Lord Privy Seal.

Earl of St. Vincent, First Lord of the Admiralty.

Earl of Chatham, Master General of the Ordnance.

Lord Pelham, Secretary of State for the Home Department.

Lord Hawkesbury, Secretary for Foreign Affairs.

Lord Hobart, Secretary for the Department of War and the Colonies.

Lord Viscount Lewisham, (afterwards Earl of Dartmouth) President of the Board of Control.

Right Hon. Charles Yorke, Secretary at War.

Earl of Liverpool, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.

Right Hon. Dudley Ryder, (afterwards Lord Harrowby) Treasurer of the Navy.

Right Hon. Thomas Steele and Lord Glenbervie, Joint Paymasters of his Majesty's Forces.

Lord Auckland and Lord Charles Spencer, Joint Postmasters General.

John Hiley Addington, Esq. and Nicholas Vansittart, Esq. Secretaries of the Treasury,

Sir William Grant, Master of the Rolls.

Sir Edward Law, (afterwards Lord Ellenborough) Attorney-General.

Hon. Spencer Percival, Solicitor-General.

Of the most important friend of Mr. Pitt in this list, the Lord Chancellor Eldon, it is our intention to subjoin a few particulars by no means uninteresting, as it is also to illustrate, by a portrait, the memoirs of his great patron and friend.

John Scott is the second son of a respectable officer in the management of the coal trade at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, of which place he was also a native; as well as his elder brother Sir William Scott, the most able civilian of his time, on whom honours which have often been announced as intended for him could con-

character. Though enjoying in the fullest sense the *otium cum dignitate*, he did not disdain to direct the

fer no honour. He was educated at Oxford, and entered of the Middle Temple, in 1772. The talents of Mr. Scott were not of that striking kind, to elicit and demand approbation, but rather to persevere in a steady course of eminence; and however much his powers may have been appreciated by his learned and affectionate brother, it is certain that none of his friends looked forward to that distinction which has since awaited him, or the rank to which he has so deservedly been raised. An instance of this occurred particularly on his marriage to Miss Wallis, of Newcastle, whose uncle was exceedingly rich, and as usual estimated talents much lower than wealth. This gentleman, who lived in a style of great elegance, angry that his niece should have married so *lowly*, made a point of receiving Mr. Scott, when upon the northern circuit, in the meanest manner possible, ever excluding for the time every common indulgence from his table. Let commercial arrogance hence learn how ridiculous are its moral calculations, and the pride of wealth, and the exultation of ignorance no longer embitter the struggles of genius, at least where envy has not been excited by presumption, nor censure by imprudence. Consistent with what has been first said, the progress of Mr. Scott was slow and sure. He was first noticed and promoted by Lord Thurlow, and in 1783, was elected to parliament for Weobly. He was knighted on becoming solicitor-general, in 1788, and to him the regency bill of Mr. Pitt was attributed. But his first great effort was on the memorable trials for high-treason in 1794, when (having, in the preceding year, been appointed attorney-general) he opened the case of the crown in a speech of nine hours, and prosecuted the heads of the affiliated societies with unequalled vigour. Since then he continued to advance. In 1799, he became chief justice of the common pleas, with the title of Baron Eldon, drawn from a place of that name in his native county; and on the resignation, Earl Rosslyn, he was appointed Lord High Chancellor of Great Britain. His lordship's eloquence as well as sentiments are perfectly of the school of Pitt; and, as he is yet in the vigour of life, much may be expected from the powers which he has evinced on many occasions.

full force of those talents which had governed empires to the command of a body of volunteers under his influence as Warden of the Cinque Ports, from which they took their name ; and which under his direction became remarkable for excellent discipline, and the purest and most elevated patriotism.

The exigencies of the state as well as the wishes of all lovers of the British constitution, called Mr. Pitt again to the helm of affairs,* but under other circumstances than those to which he had been accustomed. The complexion of the times had been altered during the variations of an inefficient government, and among other mortifications which were prepared by the vigilance of opposition, was the prosecution of his friend Lord Melville, upon grounds, at best equivocal, with the utmost severity of the legal art.

* This administration, the last ever formed by Mr. Pitt, was composed in the following manner :—

Right Hon. William Pitt, First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Duke of Portland, President of the Council.

Lord Eldon, Lord Chancellor.

Earl of Westmoreland, Lord Privy Seal.

Lord Viscount Melville, First Lord of the Admiralty.

Earl of Chatham, Master-General of the Ordnance.

Lord Hawkesbury, Secretary of State for the Home Department.

Lord Harrowby, Secretary for Foreign Affairs.

Earl Camden, Secretary for the Department of War and the Colonies.

Lord Castlereagh, President of the Board of Control for the Affairs of India.

Lord Mulgrave, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.

Right Hon. William Dundas, Secretary at War.

Having again planned the salvation of Europe by a blow the most decisive of any that had hitherto been struck, while waiting with anxiety the result that should astonish the world, it failed, and the proud feelings of Mr. Pitt, which nothing had hitherto been able to subdue, sunk with it. He was seized with an indisposition which was early found to take an unfavourable turn.

This illness originated in extreme debility, brought on by excessive anxiety and unwearied attention to business. By this debility his whole nervous system was so deranged, that for weeks together he was unable to sleep, and this privation of rest, originating in weakness, still farther augmented the cause, so as to lead to a general breaking up of his constitution. An hereditary gout completed the whole—producing according to its ordinary effect on a debilitated system, water in the chest, and such a weakness of stomach that he could neither admit nor retain any thing.

Since the excess of the dropsical symptoms Mr. Pitt lay in a state of sleep and insensibility. Before these

Right Hon. George Canning, Treasurer of the Navy.

Right Hon. George Rose and Right Hon. Lord Charles Somerset, Joint Paymasters of his Majesty's Forces.

Duke of Montrose and Lord Charles Spencer, Joint Postmasters-General,

William Huskisson, Esq. and William Sturges Bourne, Esq. Secretaries of the Treasury.

Sir William Grant, Master of the Rolls.

Hon. Spencer Percival, Attorney-General.

Sir Thomas Manners Sutton, Solicitor-General.

symptoms, the privation of sleep was the most painful circumstance of his illness.

On Tuesday morning, however, (January 21) his disorder had taken a more favourable turn, and the fever was apparently so abated, that his physicians entertained hopes of his recovery; but towards evening, when the gentlemen who chiefly attended him paid his visit, before taking leave of his patient for the night, he found that the fever had returned with increased violence, and every symptom was so aggravated, that all expectation was at an end. It became now necessary to declare an opinion, and to acquaint Mr. Pitt himself with the imminent danger. The bishop of Lincoln, the oldest and fondest friend of Mr. Pitt, was called out of the room, and the following opinion was expressed to him, nearly in these words: "He cannot live above forty-eight hours—the disorder has taken a mortal turn—any attempt to amuse him from his present lethargy would be attended with instant death; he is not strong enough for medicine, or any restorative application. If he lingers a few days it will astonish me."*

The bishop of Lincoln now saw the necessity of intimating the danger to Mr. Pitt. He fulfilled this painful office with firmness; Mr. Pitt was hardly sensible: this dreaded shock had scarcely power to dissipate his lethargy; but after a few moments he waved his hand, and was left alone with the bishop.

He instantly expressed himself perfectly resigned to the *divine will*, and, with the utmost composure, asked

* This account is drawn from one which assumed an official character.

Sir Walter Farquhar, who was present, how long he might expect to live?

Mr. Pitt then entered into a conversation of some length with the bishop of Lincoln upon religious subjects. He repeatedly declared, in the strongest terms of humility, a sense of his own unworthiness, and a firm reliance upon the *mercy* of God, through the *merits* of *Christ*.

After this the bishop of Lincoln prayed by his bedside for a considerable time; and Mr. Pitt appeared greatly composed by these last duties of religion.

A man of the superior mind of Mr. Pitt could not but have the strongest impressions of religion; doubtless at this awful moment they soothed his pillow, and whispered comfort to his soul.

During the night his fever continued; and the strong convulsions in his stomach, more than once threatened to break up his frame.

The bishop of Lincoln sat up with him.—The physicians now thought proper to discontinue medicine.—During the morning of Wednesday repeated enquiries were made after him, and a statement of his danger was transmitted to his Majesty, to his relations, and to most of his friends.—Lady Hester Stanhope, his niece, and Mr. James Stanhope, are said to have had an interview with him on Wednesday morning, and to have received his last adieu. His brother, the Earl of Chatham, took his last farewell late at night. Mr. Pitt was scarcely sensible. He could speak nothing; he could express affection, gratitude, and hope, only by signs.—The bishop of Lincoln continued with him all night.—The mortal symptoms were now approaching to a crisis. His extremities were already cold, and his

senses began to fail. As a last and desperate effort to protract life, blisters were applied to the soles of his feet. They restored him to something of life and recollection, but they could arrest nothing of the progress of death. It is said that he continued clear and composed till a short time before his dissolution, which took place without much addition of suffering or struggle, at half past four on Thursday morning, January 23, 1806. The same day on which he first took his seat in parliament.

What more remains to tell of him, whose voice a few short weeks before had set the world in arms! His remains after a time, during which a public funeral had been accorded to him by parliament, were removed for the contemplation of his friends to the Painted Chamber of the House of Lords, an honour chiefly confined to peers.

At nine o'clock on Thursday, Feb. 20, 1806, a crowd began to assemble at New and Old Palace-yard, to see this distinguished statesman lying in state in the Painted Chamber. The crowd completely filled the avenues, and at ten o'clock the doors of the lobby of the House of Commons were thrown open.

On passing the raised lobby of the House of Commons, the spectators entered the long gallery, which was hung with black, and lighted up by seventy-one wax lights in tin sconces, and attended by Bow-street officers. The spectators then proceeded to the Painted Chamber, the passage to and from which was in a horse shoe form, and at the upper end of which was placed the coffin, on bearers, completely covered with a pall.

On the right of the latter was placed ten silver can-

andlesticks, on pedestals covered with black cloth and large wax tapers, interspersed with four elegant flags, with the various insignia of the several offices of the deceased and his arms. At the foot of the coffin was placed the king's banner, with an admiral's streamer and jack rolled, with his shield and sword, and his arms embossed, on a raised platform, over which were observed his helmet and other insignia, surmounted by the anchor supporting a *crane* (the Chatham crest); on the left of the coffin were placed the same number of wax lights and banners as on the right, with Mr. Thomas as principal. At the head of the coffin also, ten gentlemen of the wardrobe, attendants in deep mourning cloaks and scarfs, with twelve other gentlemen porters variously dispersed.

The whole of the Painted Chamber was also hung in black, the upper part of which displayed a silver border, about a foot deep, which greatly added to the sublimity of the scene.

All around the chamber were tin sconces, bearing one hundred and thirty-two wax lights; between each light was a banner with the Chatham arms elegantly painted.

At the head of the coffin, under the canopy, was placed the escutcheons and banners of the Chatham arms. The canopy was surmounted by plumes of black and white ostrich feathers, with a deep painted border representing a viscount's coronet and the Chatham crest, in drapery and wreaths.—From thence the spectators retired through the new door of the House of Lords into Old Palace-yard.

The ceremony of lying in state continued till Friday

evening, the following day (Feb. 22), being appointed for the public interment of Mr. Pitt.

At an early hour on Saturday, New Palace-yard, Union-street, King-street, and the Sanctuary, were covered with gravel. At ten o'clock a party of the third regiment of guards arrived, and were stationed inside of the railing of Westminster Hall gate to the west door of Westminster Abbey.—A number of the life guards were stationed at all the leading streets to regulate the carriages on their way to the parliament house. The tickets directed all those who were to walk in the procession to be set down in the greatest order at the doors of the houses of Commons and Lords.

On their entrance, the heralds and proper officers, from the College of Arms, were stationed to conduct them to their proper places in the procession. Sir Isaac Heard arrived before twelve o'clock; and having inspected the arrangements made by his officers, the procession began to move. At half past twelve it came out of Westminster Hall, which was announced by the drums and fifes playing the 104th Psalm, in a very solemn manner, and trumpets and kettle drums playing a dirge. The procession moved in the following order:—

The Lord Chamberlain's officers.

The standard,

Carried by General Lenox, supported by Mr. Steele, and
Mr. Long.

The Guidon,

Carried by Brigadier General Hope, supported by Mr. Ryder,
and another gentleman.

The deceased and Earl Chatham's domestics.

About one hundred members of the House of Commons.

Twenty clergymen in their canonicals.

Six Trumpets.

The Banner and Crest of Mr. Pitt,

Supported by Mr. Wilberforce, and another gentleman.

Fourteen Officers who attended the deceased while lying in State.

Eighteen Knights and Bachelors.

Baron Sutton in his robes.

The Lord Mayor of London.

The Speaker of the House of Commons.

Ten Bishops

Thirty-two Peers.

Their Royal Highnesses the Dukes of York, Cumberland,
and Cambridge.

Helm and Crest, Sword and Target, and Surcoat, borne by Somerset, Lancaster, and Chester Heralds.

The Body.*

Chief Mourner,

The Earl of Chatham, the brother of the deceased, supported by
Earls Westmoreland and Camden.

Sir Isaac Heard, Garter King at Arms, carrying the
Staff of Office.

The Banner of Emblems,

Carried by Mr. Percival, the late Attorney-General and supported by Mr. Canning and Mr. Rose.

About fifty relations and friends of the deceased.

The Cinque Port Volunteers, with crape on their hats and left arms.

* The coffin in which the remains of Mr. Pitt was deposited, was covered with black velvet; the corner mouldings and other ornaments were so highly plated as to look exactly like silver; the inscription was as follows:—

The Right Honourable

WILLIAM PITT,

Only Brother of the Earl of Chatham,

One of his Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council,

First Lord of the Treasury,

And

Chancellor of the Exchequer,

A Commissioner of the Affairs of India,

Constable of Dover Castle,

Warden, Keeper, and Admiral of the Cinque Ports,

Master of the Trinity-House,

And

High Steward of the University of Cambridge,

F. R. S. and M. A.

Died 23d January, 1806,

Aged 46 years.

The first of the procession entered Westminster Abbey at one o'clock, but it was half an hour after before the body entered. Dr. Vincent, (the Dean) the Prebends, Minor Canons, and Gentlemen of the choir, were ready to receive them; and on the entrance of the corpse, they began to sing Dr. Croft's funeral service, which they continued to do till the body was placed in the centre of the choir, when the regular burial service was read by one of the Minor Canons. The anthem, burial service, &c. was the same as that performed at the funeral of Lord Nelson, at St. Paul's.

Till twelve o'clock there were but few more persons in the neighbourhood than when common business is proceeding. Palace Yard and the streets adjoining the sanctuary, were by no means crowded when the procession was moving. Several scaffolds and temporary seats were erected. Some of them had a few persons and others none.

Among the distinguished personages besides the royal Dukes, were—the Dukes of Montrose and Rutland.—Marquisses of Buckingham, Thomond, and Abercorn.—Earls Spencer, Temple, Romney, Winchelsea, and Camden.—Lords Sidmouth, Barrington, Paget, Macdonald, Pomfret, Kelly, Rivers, Bulkley, Hood, Hawkesbury, Elliot, Grantham, Castlereagh, Auckland and Carrington.—Archbishop of Canterbury.—Bishops of Bath and Wells, Norwich, Bristol, London, Lincoln, Ely, Exeter, and Chester.

Mr. Pitt made a sort of nuncupative will, as follows:—

"I OWE Sir Walter Farquhar one thousand guineas, from October 1805, as a professional debt.

"W. PITT."

"TWELVE thousand pounds, with interest, from October, 1801, to Mr. Long, Mr. Steele, Lord Carrington, Bishop of Lincoln, Lord Camden, Mr. Joseph Smith, and I earnestly request their acceptance of it. I wish, if means can be found for it, of paying double wages to all of my servants who were with me at my decease.

"W. PITT."

"I WISH my brother, with the Bishop of Lincoln to look over my papers and to settle my affairs. I owe more than I can leave behind me.

"W. PITT."

Thus concluded the powerful career, of the great minister, whose conduct and character we have attempted to display, partly by a simple statement of facts as they have arisen; and partly by a faithful recital of those orations, which while they offer the best display of his talents, at the same time afford the most certain account of his motives, and ends.

His person was tall and slender, his complexion rather fair, with blue eyes, large forehead, and prominent features; his countenance was strong, thoughtful, and rather stern, except when enlivened by some sudden impulse.

Although some who acted with him, had ended their friendship with his life, no man could be happier than Mr. Pitt in respect to the hands in which he left his fame. In a "Brief examination into the Increase of the Revenue, Commerce, and Navigation of Great

Britain" during his administration. The right honorable George Rose, than whom none, on any subject of political economy or private virtue, can be more capable of judging, thus expressed himself:—

"I have hitherto confined myself to matters within the immediate department which Mr. Pitt presided; but considering the pre-eminence he long held in the councils of his Majesty, and that unhappily for the country he is no longer among us, I may, I hope, be allowed to refer very shortly to some of the principal matters that occurred during the eventful period of his administration, and to say a few words respecting his character.

"If we look to naval and military operations it will be seen, with no small degree of astonishment as well as satisfaction, that in the period referred to, we took and destroyed more ships of the line of our enemies* than in all the wars we have been engaged in since the revolution, *viz.* those in the reign of King William, Queen Anne, during the hostilities with Spain, in the reign of George the first, (when the fleet of Spain was destroyed in the Mediterranean), in the wars of 1742, of 1756, and the American war.

"That the French under their emperor, Buonaparte, were driven out of Egypt, by an inferior army, composed of troops from the banks of the Thames and

* These amount to 110 ships of the line; while those in the former wars were in number only 109. In this comparison, the ships destroyed in the very arduous enterprize at Copenhagen, are not included, although the expedition was equipped under Mr. Pitt's government, nor several ships of the line lost in a storm, when the invasion of Ireland was attempted."

of the Ganges, who met in that country and there gained immortal honour; and that they were deprived of every foot of land they had on the continent of India, as well as of almost all their colonies in the West Indies; and that many of those of Spain and Holland were taken by the British arms, while the numerous and extensive possessions of Great Britain in all parts of the world were completely protected.

“ If we turn our attention to what has passed within these kingdoms, under our immediate view, we shall not have less reason to admire the character and to revere the memory of one of the most able, firm, virtuous, and disinterested men that ever lived in any nation or in any time. His conduct during the long and dangerous illness of our beloved sovereign, in 1788-9, will not soon be forgotten by his grateful countrymen. It is the pride of the British constitution, as now understood and administered, that the personal interest of the monarch is so much identified with the interests of the people, that the latter feel every circumstance tending to the health, the comfort, or the dignity of their sovereign, as a favourite acquisition to themselves: and I think I may venture to say, there never was a period of more genuine national joy than when our beloved king, after a considerable interval of alarming indisposition, was restored to the enjoyment of health, and to the exercise of his public functions. At that juncture there were particular circumstances in the political state and political opinions of Europe, which tended more than ever to endear to every good and virtuous man the monarch they saw re-established, and the tranquillity which that happy event had restored. The display of wisdom and firmness evinced by Mr.

Pitt, during that interval of national anxiety which the king's illness occasioned, did him infinite honour : he took that high ground which his virtue as well as his ability entitled him to take, and with a dignity and courage inspired by both, rebuked at once the fears of the timid and supported the rights of his sovereign : not less faithful to his country than loyal to his king, he devoted his services to both in a manner equally manly and disinterested. We rejoice that the danger,

“ Which overcame us like a summer's cloud,”

was too short to give all the effect to his services which circumstances less favourable might have shewn them calculated to produce.

“ Nor should the perils with which the country and its constitution were for some time threatened in consequence of what may be termed the mania of the French revolution ever be forgotten ; though perhaps not now strong in the imagination of the people (and to some of the less considerate or less candid seem to have been exaggerated beyond the truth) from the very success with which they were opposed : by those, however, who had better opportunities of fairly appreciating Mr. Pitt's services ; and of calculating the magnitude of those dangers which he opposed and overcame, the recollection of that acuteness, and clearness of perception, that soundness of judgment, that composure and fortitude of mind, which never forsook him on the most trying occasions, and with which he met the difficulties of his own and of the public situation, will be now remembered, as at the time they were acknowledged, as not less admirable in themselves, than important in their consequences.”

“An intention is entertained of a history of Mr. Pitt’s whole life being given to the public.* In the mean time I trust I shall be excused in making some very short observations respecting him, as few had better, perhaps none so frequent, opportunities of forming a judgment on the subject in the last two and twenty years of his life, during which period, I had the happiness to possess his affectionate friendship and perfect confidence, without the slightest or shortest interruption.

“To those who enjoyed his intimacy I might safely refer for the proof of his possessing those private virtues and endowments, which, though they may sometimes be accounted foreign to the public character of a statesman, the congenial feelings of Englishmen always dispose them to regard as the best pledges of a minister’s upright administration. Around these, in the present case an additional lustre has been thrown by the circumstances of his death; by the manner in which he met it; and by the composure, the fortitude, the resignation, and the religion, which marked his last moments. With a manner somewhat reserved and distant in what might be termed his public deportment, no man was ever better qualified to gain, or more successful in fixing the attachment of his friends, than Mr. Pitt. They saw all the full energies of his character softened into the most perfect complacency and sweetness of disposition in the circles of private life, the pleasures of which no one more cheerfully enjoyed

* This work which is understood to be from the united pens of Mr. Gifford and Mr. Redhead Yorke, must necessarily excite the highest expectation.

or more agreeably promoted, when the paramount duties he conceived himself to owe the public, admitted of his mixing in them that indignant severity with which he met and subdued unfounded opposition; that keenness of sarcasm with which he repelled and withered (as it might be said) the powers of most of his assailants. In debate, were exchanged in the society of his intimate friends for a kindness of heart, a gentleness of demeanor, and playfulness of good-humour, which none ever witnessed without interest, or participated without delight. His mind which, in the grasp and extent of its capacity, seized with a quickness almost intuitive, all the most important relations of political power and political economy, was not less uncommonly susceptible of all the light and elegant impressions which form the great charm of conversation of cultivated minds.

“This sensibility to the enjoyments of private friendship greatly enhanced the sacrifice he made of every personal comfort to a rigid performance of duty to the public; that duty, for the last year of his life, was indeed of the most laborious and unremitting kind. The strength of his attachment to his sovereign, and the ardour of his zeal for the welfare of his country, led him to forego, not only every pleasure and amusement, but almost every pause and relaxation of business necessary to the preservation of *health*, till it was too late, in a frame like his, alas! for the preservation of *life*!! That life he sacrificed to his country, not certainly like another most valuable and illustrious servant of the public, (whose death has been deeply and universally lamented) amidst those animating circumstances in which the incomparable hero often ven-

tured it in battle, and at last resigned it for the most splendid of all his unexampled victories, but with that patriotic self devotedness which looks for a reward only in its own consciousness of right.

“ The praise of virtue, of honour, and of disinterested purity, whether in public or private character, need scarcely be claimed for his memory ; for those his enemies, (if he now has any, which I am unwilling to believe, although some are frequently endeavouring to depreciate his merits) will not venture to deny ; and his country in whose cause they were exercised to the last, will know how to value and record them. That they should be so valued and recorded is important on every principle of justice to the individual, and benefit to the community. To an upright minister in Great Britain, zealous for the interest and honour of his country, there is no reward for profit, emolument, or patronage, which can be esteemed a compensation for the labours the privations, the anxieties, or the dangers of his situation ; it is in the approbation of his sovereign, and in the suffrage of his countrymen ; added to his own conviction of having done every thing to deserve it, that he must look for that reward which is to console him for all the cares and troubles of his station ; the opposition of rivals : the misrepresentation of enemies ; the desertion or peevishness of friends ; and sometimes the mistaken censures of the people. 'Tis the honourable ambition that looks beyond the present time, that must create encourage, and support a virtuous and enlightened statesman ;—that must confer on his mind, the uprightness and purity that rise above all self-advantage ; the courage that guards the state from foreign hostility

or internal faction ; the firmness that must often resist the wishes, to ensure the safety of the people.

“ This is the legitimate ambition of a statesman ; and that Mr. Pitt possessed it, his friends are convinced ; but he has been sometimes accused (by those who although their opposition was active and systematic, yet knew how to honour the man) of a less laudable and less patriotic ambition, that wished “ to reign alone,” to exclude from the participation of office and of power, other men, whose counsels might have assisted him to guide the country amidst its difficulties and embarrassments, or might have contributed to its safety in the hour of its danger. It is, however, perfectly well known to some of the highest characters in the kingdom, that Mr. Pitt, after the resignation of Mr. Addington, in the summer of 1804, was most anxiously desirous that Lord Grenville and Mr. Fox, should form a part of the new administration, and pressed their admission into office in that quarter, where only such earnestness could be effectual ; conceiving the forming a strong government as important to the public welfare, and as calculated to call forth the united talents, as well as the utmost resources of the empire : in which endeavor he persisted till within a few months of his death. I am aware of the delicacy of such a statement, but I am bold in the certainty of its truth. My profound respect for those by whom such averment, if false, might be contradicted, would not suffer me to make it, were it called for, to do justice to that great and virtuous statesman whose unrivalled qualities, both in private and in public life will ever be in my recollection.

“ *Dum memor ipse mei, dum spiritus hos regit artus.*”

Such is the perspicuous view afforded by this good man, and eminent politician, of the talents and virtues of his departed friend.

If any thing more be wanting to assert his right to the gratitude of a country divided only in speculative opinions, or if friendship, shaken by adversity, require a solacing contemplation—it may be said, look around on that country, yet smiling amid the shock of nations, and on the world; *si quæris monumentum circumspice*. Behold the only land in which those opinions are free—the only state in which a wreck of that prosperity, which so lately beamed upon whole empires, remains.

Survey the united kingdom, and doubtless much will be found to lament in its condition, that might be better; its arts and its agriculture might be advanced, and its manufactures and commerce, unshackled and promoted: its labouring orders might be rendered less dependant on beneficence, and its middling classes removed from distress. But look beyond the boundaries of that, notwithstanding, highly favoured country, and there is nothing that can be worse; instead of a condition susceptible of improvement, and firm on its own basis, there is nothing but warfare, and ruin, and dismay; kingdoms lately flourishing and powerful, are now laid in the dust.—No country knows the name by which it will be called on the morrow.—An honest and laborious people are coerced into the character of a predatory soldiery, beneath whom fall their own neighbours and kindred; and even where the shew of government is yet imposed, all is anarchy and destruction.

To the energies of Pitt who will refuse to ascribe this pleasing difference in favour of Great Britain?

A biographical application of his life cannot perhaps be better made than that which has already issued from the pen of Mr. Canning.

ELIJAH'S MANTLE.

When by the Almighty's dread command,
Elijah, call'd from Israel's land,
Rose in the sacred flame,
His Mantle good Elisha caught,
And with the prophet's spirit fraught,
Her second hope became.

In Pitt our Israel saw combin'd
The patriot's heart—the prophet's mind,
Elijah's spirit here ;
Now, sad reverse !—that spirit rest,
No confidence, no hope is left ;
For no Elisha's near.

Is there among the greedy band,
Who've seiz'd on power with harpy hand,
And patriot worth assume,
One on whom public faith can rest—
One fit to wear Elijah's vest,
And cheer the nation's gloom ?

Grenville,—to aid thy treasury fame,
A portion of his Mantle claim,
Pitt's generous ardour feel ;
'Bove sorded self resolve to soar,
Amidst exchequer gold be poor,
Thy wealth—the public weal.

Fox,—if on thee some remnant fall,
The shred may to thy mind recall
Those hours of loud debate
When thy unhallow'd lips oft prais'd
“ The glorious fabric ” traitors rais'd
On Bourbon's fallen state—

Thy soul let Pitt's example fire,
With patriot zeal thy tongue inspire,
Spite of thy Gallic leaven ;
And teach thee in thy latest day,
His form of prayer, (if thou can'st pray)
“ O save my country, Heaven ! ”

Windham,—if e'er thy sorrows flow
 For private loss, or public woe,
 Thy rigid brow unbend :
 Tears, over Cæsar, Brutus shed,
 His hatred warr'd not with the dead—
 And Pitt was once thy friend.

Does envy bid thee *not* to mourn ?
 Hold then his Mantle up to scorn,
 His well-earn'd fame assail ;
 Of funeral honours rob his corse,
 And at his virtues, till thou 1 hoarse,
 Like curst Thersites rail.

Illustrious Roscius of the state,
 New breech'd and harness'd for debate,
 Thou wonder of thy age !!!
 Petty or Betty art thou hight
 By Granta sent to strut thy night
 On Stephen's bustling stage ?

Pitt's 'chequer robe will Petty wear ?
 Take of his Mantle then a share,
 'Twill aid thy ways and means ;
 And should fat Jack, and his cabal,
 Cry "rob us the exchequer, Hal!"
 'Twill charm away those fiends.

Sage Palinurus of the realm !
 By Vincent call'd to take the helm,
 And play a proxy's part ;
 Dost thou a star, or compass know,
 Canst reef aloft—or steer below ?
 Hast conn'd the seaman's chart ?

No ! from Pitt's Mantle tear a rag,
 Enough to serve thee for a flag,
 And hoist it on thy mast :
 Beneath that sign (our prosperous star)
 Shall future Nelsons rush to war,
 And rival victories past.

Sidmouth,—though low his head be laid
 Who call'd thee from thy native shade,
 And gave thee second birth ;—
 Gave thee the sweets of power and place,
 The tufted robe—the gilded mace,
 And rear'd thy puny worth :

Think how his Mantle wrapp'd thee round ;
Is one of equal virtues found

Among thy *new* compeers ?
Or can thy cloak of Amiens stuff,
Once laugh'd to scorn by blue and buff,
Screen thee from Windham's jeers ?

When faction threaten'd Britain's land,
Thy new-made friends—a desperate band,
Like Ahab—stood reprov'd ;
Pitt's powerful tongue their rage could check ;
His counsel sav'd, midst general wreck,
The Israel that he lov'd.

Yes, honour'd shade ! whilst near thy grave
The letter'd sage, and chieftain brave,
The votive marble claim ;
O'er thy cold corse—the public tear
Congeal'd, a chrystal shrine shall rear
Unsullied—as thy fame! !!*

* It need scarcely be added that this poem alludes to the administration which immediately succeeded the death of Mr. Pitt.

END.

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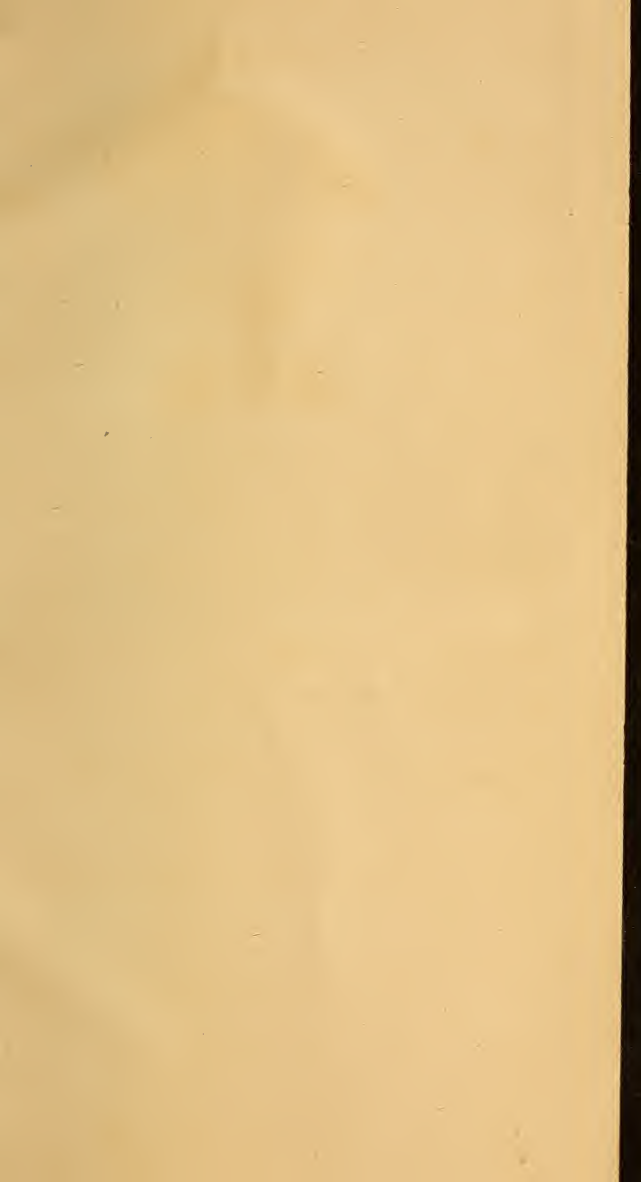
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